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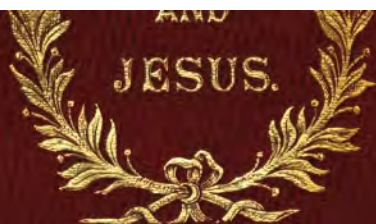
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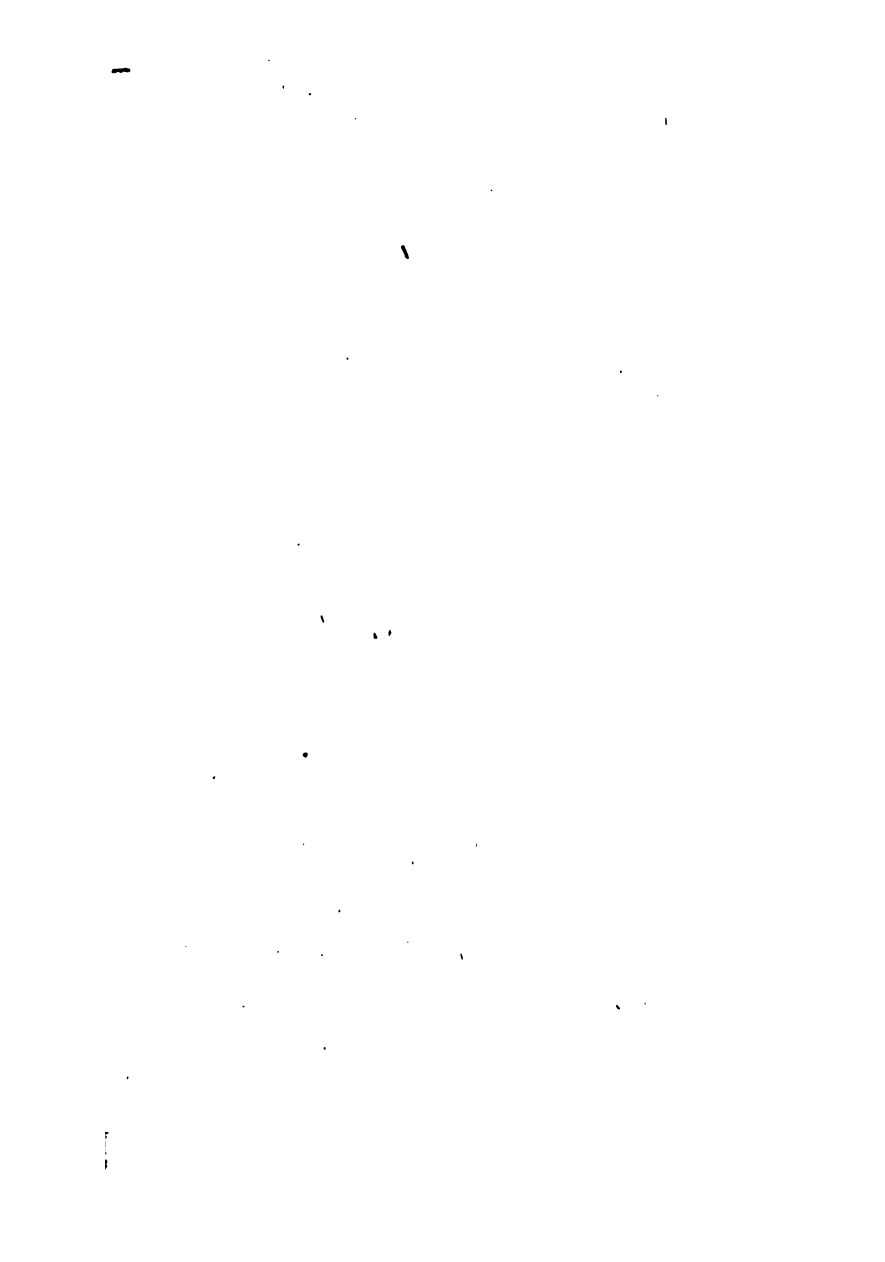




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JOSEPH AND JESUS:

BEING

AN ATTEMPT TO SHED NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT
UPON OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

BY THE

REV. W. LINCOLN, A.K.C.,

CURATE OF PUDSEY, NEAR LEEDS.



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TO
THE CHRISTIANS AND OTHER PROFESSORS
ASSEMBLING TO WORSHIP GOD IN
Indsey Church,
THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSES,
DELIVERED BEFORE YOU,
ARE AFFECTIONATELY SUBMITTED,
AS A SMALL MEMORIAL
OF THAT SPIRITUAL BOND OF UNION WHICH HAS,
THROUGH THE LORD'S MERCY,
EXISTED BETWEEN US,
AND AS A SOLEMN TOKEN THAT

The Gospel
HAS BEEN FAITHFULLY DELIVERED
IN YOUR EARS,
BY YOUR OBEDIENT SERVANT IN CHRIST,
WILLIAM LINCOLN.




PREFACE.

The object of the following pages is to testify of the Person, Work, Love, Grace, Preciousness, Fulness, and Glory of Christ. I am well aware this can never be adequately and fully accomplished. No christian, nay, no saint triumphant, can achieve this; and less, far less, can burning seraph or lofty archangel. They may be, and ever are, telling of Jesus' blessed love; but never, never, can it be said that they have *told* it. The Love of Jesus is an ocean without shore, or bottom, or brim. The Grace of Jesus is infinite. The Preciousness of Jesus must be felt, must be experienced. The Fulness of Jesus is inexhaustible. The Glory of Jesus is seen best from the Cross, where all the divine attributes meet together in one undazzling focus; but which still, even there, can only be surveyed, cannot be comprehended. Why then attempt a theme confessedly ineffable? Say, rather, Why not? It ravishes the saint, it renews the sinner, it oft rouses the careless, godless slumberer and sleeper. To think and speak of Jesus,

under the Spirit's blessing, enlarges the soul, elevates the affections, purifies the heart, and sanctifies the life. It pleases the eternal Father, it accords with the design of the ever-blessed Spirit, it glorifies the Saviour. Understand me. I do not mean that you bring any accession of any good thing to Jesus which he had not before. Far from that. *Every* good thing comes from him (James i. 17). Therefore you cannot glorify him thus: to attempt to bring anything to him is to dishonour him. But he is glorified by being known; and he is the more glorified the more he is known. Deeply do I feel, indeed, that the following is but a feeble attempt in this way. But Jesus does not despise feeble attempts; and, therefore, his people will not.

One reason why I have attempted to parallel the life of Joseph with the life of Christ, was in order that I might give a *specimen* how the substance of each Testament is Jesus. I have sought that humble readers of the word of God might learn throughout it to behold Jesus. Some may object to me the fact, that no inspired writer has ever claimed Joseph as a type of Christ. My answer is, I do not write for cavilers and critics, but for hungry souls, who want to learn more of Jesus. That there are *some* allusive and typical



characters in the Old Testament we are expressly assured of. Thus Adam, Moses, Aaron, David, Jonah, and many others, we know from indisputable authority to have been types of Christ. The question is, whether there are no more types in the Old Testament than those declared to be such in the New; and whether, in all other cases, God intended nothing further than the bare history. I think there are many others. I believe that those types, explained to us in the New Testament, are designed to encourage us to prosecute the search further. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews has not explained *every* rite commanded in the book of Leviticus;—were those which he has passed over without a meaning? We can see, we admit, that there are many other prophecies concerning the sufferings of Christ than those which the evangelists have quoted: and why not, therefore, other types? Am I, for instance, to believe that Abraham's two wives were allegorical as well as historical personages, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Paul, affirms to be the case (Gal. iv. 24—27); and not believe that that hoary patriarch's act of taking his son, his only son, his Isaac, whom he loved, and offering him up to God,—that this solemn act of his had not the slightest possible allusion to God's taking his Son, his only

Son, his Jesus, whom he loved, and offering him up for our sins, simply because the apostle had not occasion to say so? I trow not.

However, the friendly reader will observe that I have not pushed the analogy between the type and the Antitype to the extreme, but that I have merely taken some broad outlines from the life of the one, and then pointed to the corresponding circumstances in the life of the other, leaving him to judge for himself where the type ends.

A further reason for my treating the subject so as I have done was, that I thought that the continued parallelism would be likely to prove interesting. There are very few who do not admire and love to read the beautiful history of Joseph. And so I ventured to hope that by throwing New Testament light upon that artless and affecting story, some might be allured to study the life of Him who is indeed greater than Joseph; and whilst thus engaged, be brought, by omnipotent grace, within the fold of the gospel. Oh, if the Lord would be pleased to bless this endeavour to the conversion of at least *one* soul, then truly would the author have yet one more reason why he should adore and love him! Oh, if he would but own it to the edification and establishment of *one* of his *converted people*! Is anything too hard for the Lord?

We know that he delights to make use of simple and unworthy instruments to promote his glory, in order that thereby it may be manifest that the excellency of the power is of God (2 Cor. iv. 7). Oh, if all his people did but know what a gracious Lord he is, never more would they dread him, ever more would they love him with that love which casts out fear. May he make use of this little work, if it please him, to help on this blessed end!

Reader, I beg of you to abstain from passing judgment on this work until you have carefully read it *through*. When this work is in your hand, have the Word of God at your elbow. Consult the texts as they are quoted, and ask the Lord the Holy Spirit to make you understand them. Again, be not surprised if you find high doctrine in this book. However unconverted man may dislike it, it is, after all, in the Bible: and if so, it is my duty and my privilege as a minister of Christ to inculcate it. I dare not pick and choose with the word of the great God. I must not shun to declare his whole counsel (Acts xx. 27). Yea, woe is me if I do not preach it all (1 Cor. ix. 16). The Lord knows better than man can teach him how to glorify himself, how to comfort his people, how to convert the sinner. Of this I am fully assured,

that NOT ONE SINGLE SINNER IN ALL THE WORLD EVER SOUGHT JESUS IN VAIN. NOT ONE WHO SEEKS THE SAVIOUR SHALL BE SENT EMPTY AWAY. But of this I am equally assured, that if He were to wait until we applied to him, heaven would be empty. Christ makes us unwilling ones willing in the day of his power; he invites all these willing, hungry, heavy-laden sinners to come to him, he brings them all to him; and then after they have found him he whispers in their hearts, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you (John xv. 16). Once ye were unwilling, but my omnipotent grace made you willing. And when once I had made you willing, when once I had caused sin to feel a burden to you, I paused not until I had brought you to my Cross; and I will not cease until I have fully accomplished the work which I have so graciously begun in your soul (Ps. cxxxviii. 8; Phil. i. 6). My grace shall do it all!" Lastly, gentle reader, if you derive a blessing from the perusal of the following pages, pray that a like blessing may be vouchsafed to all God's people that shall read them, and that, as long as he lives, may be kept steadfast in the defence of the Truth,

WILLIAM LINCOLN.



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SOME CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF JOSEPH.

Joseph sold when seventeen years of age.

Then there elapse, between his arrival in Egypt and his being constituted Prime Minister, thirteen years, which may be thus divided :

In Potiphar's house ten years.

In prison three years.

When made Prime Minister he was thirty years of age.

From his leaving Dothan to his seeing his father again there elapsed twenty-two years, when he was thirty-nine years of age.

From his leaving Dothan to the time of the interment of his father there elapsed thirty-nine years, when he was fifty-six years of age.

He lived after his father's death fifty-four years.

He died at the age of one hundred and ten years.

Chapters seven and ten of this work are recommended to the consideration of distressed, sin-burdened souls.

JOSEPH AND JESUS.

I.

THE BELOVED SON.

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours."—Gen. xxxvii. 3.

Although all Scripture, my beloved brethren, is given by inspiration of God, and is, as the apostle says, profitable, yet I think we must feel that for the new convert it would be better if he were for a season especially to devote himself to the study of the New Testament. Therein Jehovah appears to us in all his glory, without a single intervening cloud; therein Jesus, the adorable Mediator, is manifested to us in the flesh, is seen with our own eyes, is handled with our own hands, is heard with our own ears; and therein the magnificent and sublime scheme of Redemption is portrayed, without a single type, or shadow, or any such thing. Let but any one, it may be a wayfaring man, read Ephesians ii., or Romans iii.—viii., with the Spirit of the living God for his instructor, and very soon will he know more of God

and of himself than all the sages of the world can teach him. Soon will be indelibly engraven on his heart things which prophets and kings desired but to see, yet did not see, did not comprehend them. But both Testaments emanate from Him, and each is profitable. And so when such a reader as we have imagined advances from the New to the Old Testament, and makes use of the light derived from the former, as those with obscure sight use glasses, he will be amazed to see the extent of the union between Genesis and, say, the Gospel of St. John, between Leviticus and the Epistle to the Hebrews. And this single thing will be sufficient to convince him that each of these books, as well as the others composing altogether the Sacred Scriptures, proceed from the same author, and that that author is God. As he reads, the truths already impressed upon his mind will be strengthened and confirmed. Clearer ideas as to the meaning of the writers of the New Testament will often force themselves upon his mind. And thus each Testament will mutually assist him in the understanding of the other. Does he read of Ruin by the first Adam? then Redemption achieved by the second will certainly occur to him, and each will form a set-off to the other. Does he read of an Enoch ascending to heaven, that is to say, of a sinner embraced by Infinite Purity itself? he will see in that the first illustration afforded that the second Adam's redemption has infinitely more than undone the ruin in which the first Adam involved us. Does he read of Noah and his family saved from the ire of an avenging God by being divinely (Gen. vii. 16) shut in *the ark of gopher wood*? he learns thence the better

to understand what is intended by that doctrine so repeatedly inculcated in the New Testament—the necessity of being *in* Christ. Does he see that aged patriarch, whose piety had been inflamed by the late judgments, building (Gen. viii. 20) an altar of praise to his God? he sees, or thinks he sees, therein a faint yet vivid resemblance to that scene yet future, when the smoke of the everlasting burnings, and the wild shrieks of the lost, shall beget an intenser love, and shall cause a louder thrill of adoration, in the breasts of the redeemed, towards Him who sitteth on the throne. And what shall I more say? The time would fail me to tell of Abraham offering up his only son Isaac, and to point out the similarity and the dissimilarity of that with God offering up his only Son Jesus, and to shew how each helps us the better to understand the other; of the burning bush not consumed; and of the children of Israel, and their passage from Egypt to Canaan, that is to say, speaking in New Testament language, of the church of God, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, but which shall, despite of all opposition, presently sit down for ever on the throne of the Redeemer, as the bride, the Lamb's wife,—oh, the subject is indeed inexhaustible! Especially is this the case when we observe how expressly each prophetic and each royal writer of the Old Testament accords with each evangelist and apostle of the New in one loud and emphatic direction,—a direction which John the Baptist (the link between the two sets of writers) gathers up and embodies in one short sentence: “Behold,” says he, pointing with impassioned energy, and with both hands, to a Person glorious to the eye of *faith* to behold, “Behold the Lamb of

God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). Yes, my brethren, the Scriptures, Old as well as New, testify of Christ (John v. 39). The types, whether they be persons, or places, or things, point to Jesus. They say, We are but the shadow (Heb. x. 1), the substance is Christ: behold him! "To him," also, "give all the prophets witness" (Acts x. 43). "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10). This is their voice, listen to it: "Behold him!" Isaiah especially, that evangelical prophet, wrote of him (John xii. 41). What, my brethren, for instance, does his fifty-third chapter treat of, if it does not say, "Behold him"? And so the Evangelists too, they do but enlarge upon that blessed chapter,—their subject is Jesus Christ. Four indeed in number, they do but form a tetrachord, they harmoniously join and say, "Behold the Lamb!" The writer of the Acts of the Apostles does but present him to us enthroned, saying, Behold him! The writers of the Epistles say the same; they say, "Look to Jesus"* (Heb. xii. 2). And what is the book of Revelation? Is it not "the Revelation of Jesus Christ"? (Rev. i. 1.) Does it not present to our view Jesus bruising his enemies "with a rod of iron, dashing them in pieces like a potter's vessel"? Does it not present him to us as before the throne on our behalf, "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood"? In short, does it not say, "Behold him"?

The word of God, then, my brethren, is throughout harmonious. Its sum, its substance, its centre, its

* Απορῶντες εἰς Ἰησοῦν. "Looking *away* to Jesus." *Away* from the world,—*away* from ourselves,—*away* from our sins,—*away* from our faith,—*away* from all,—our gaze solely on Christ.

beginning, and its ending, is Jesus. If anything else be introduced, it is introduced only by the way, and hence its name. For like as when a portrait is exhibited to us, other things besides the likeness may be represented, yet we know they only form the background thereto: and when the exhibitor, pointing to the picture, says, "This is the Duke of A, or the King of B," he does not mean for a moment that it is the very living breathing individual, but his representation only: Jesus is the real Word of God; but the Scriptures being the faithful portraiture of who and what he is, as drawn by a Divine hand, they receive his name,—they, also, are called the word of God.

Your minds will have been somewhat prepared, I trust, to receive this position, by my preceding lectures on this book of Genesis. They will, I believe, receive much additional evidence and confirmation of it from him with whom I now desire to make you better acquainted,—I mean the son of Israel's old age, the loved child, the rejected brother, the trusty servant, the innocent accused, the prisoner, the lowly arbiter, the revealer of secrets, the exalted prince, the saviour of the people—Joseph. Methinks as we trace him through all the wondrous vicissitudes of his eventful life, and note that the prison was but the stepping-stone to the throne, you will be led to exclaim, A greater than Joseph is here. And fervently do I pray, that as the different personages of the history are brought successively before us, we may be led oftentimes to smite upon our breasts in secret, when we behold so faithfully depicted in his brethren's behaviour to him, our own baseness, our own ingratitude, our own cruel *unkindness*, towards that best of friends,—that

"Brother born for adversity" (Prov. xvii. 17); that dear and adorable "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother" to us (Prov. xviii. 24), notwithstanding all our vile treatment of him; that we may be led to love him more, the more we see of his unchanging love to us; that we may be led to serve him more,—more faithfully, more decidedly, more openly, more boldly, the more we see the world despise him; that we may be led to trust in him more fully, to adore him more joyfully, the more we understand of his finished work, of his great salvation, of his high exaltation, and of his mediatorial session; that we may be led to apply to him more constantly, the more we know that all things are at his disposal, that he has received gifts for men, yea, for us rebellious ones, too; and that we may be enabled ever to carry our heads erect, and not only to depend upon him, but to "*glory*" in him; seeing that, unlike the first Joseph, our Joseph is undying, "death hath no more dominion over him," inasmuch as "he ever liveth to make intercession for us" (Heb. vii. 25). Yea, oh, Lord God, Spirit of God, be with us in our meditations and bless us; make us to "increase in the knowledge of God" (Col. i. 10), to "follow on to know the Lord" (Hosea vi. 3), to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. iii. 18), that we may "know, even as also we are known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12), yea, that we may never rest until we are "able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ," which after all "passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God." In the name of Jesus, amen and amen!

Joseph was, as you all know, the elder son of Jacob and Rachel. Unto Jacob first began to appear the earnest of the fulfilment of that promise made to Abraham, to Isaac, and to himself, that their seed should be as the stars of heaven; for before that Joseph was born, he had ten sons and one daughter. God, my brethren, may appear oftentimes to forget his promises, but he never does, he only waits till the time he has determined on be come. A promise of God frequently appears like a tree in winter, naked and bare, without any appearance of life in it. Much time may elapse before any signs of life are manifest. The tree is, however, firmly rooted in a pleasant soil; and the promises of God are in Christ, yea, and in him, Amen (2 Cor. i. 20). Presently, however, the promise, like the tree, begins to bud, to blossom, and to ripen. What though the blossom be tiny at first! It shall expand,—it shall unfold. That blossom, though small, has in it the germ of the full matured fruit. Despise not, then, the day of small things!

Was it, then, through faith in this promise of God that his mother, when she had borne him, called his name Joseph, saying, "The Lord *shall add* to me another son"? Did she think, He will be mindful of his promise which he has made? The fulfilment has commenced, and shall proceed? Undoubtedly. Oh, what a wonderful thing is faith! It holds in its hand the promise of him that cannot lie, and invests it with a substantial* reality. Marvellous also is the manner in which it has to contend with the native unbelief of our hearts. Look at this woman, now so strong in faith; shortly before, she had exclaimed in fretful impatience to

* Heb. xi. 1: *ὑποστάσις*. Foundation, substance, confidence.

Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die." Yea, this holy woman's faith was at so low an ebb at that time, that she gave Bilhah to Jacob, that she might have "children by her" (Gen. xxx. 3). See Martha, in Christ's time, when she had lost her brother, giving evidence of the same internal conflict (John xi. 21, 22). "Lord," said she to Jesus, "if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." "If thou hadst been here," limiting his power to his presence. "But even now," says she, as if there was still an indistinct faint idea that he would and could raise Lazarus again. And this conflict, my brethren, the people of God have ever experienced in all ages. At one time the christian thinks his mountain stands strong, at another time he is troubled. Now the flesh appears triumphant, and now grace. Strong believers are not always strong, and weak believers shall not be always weak. Each class has yet to learn more profoundly the truth of that saying, "Faith is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8); and of that other, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). They must each feel yet more fully that they are perfect pensioners on grace. Were the strong believers always strong, such is the latent wickedness even of their hearts, and their proneness to wander, they would make too much of the instrument, too little of the glorious Object. Faith would be put in the place of Jesus. Yea, more, they would despise their weaker brethren. They would be saying in their hearts, I am rich, and have need of nothing, and would forget that they were "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But God

will not suffer his own elect to be detained in such errors. And, therefore, he humbles them, and shews them what is in their hearts, that they may take their filthiness and their emptiness to Jesus their all. It is difficult to dare to go to Jesus filthy, but so we must go. It is hard to go to Jesus empty,—we would rather take water to, than fetch water from, the well. But at last, through the Spirit's light and influence, we are constrained, after we have tried all other remedies, and applied to all the broken cisterns (Jer. ii. 13), to look to Him alone and say,

“Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to thy Cross I cling.”

This is the ultimate refuge of every christian. This is where the Holy Ghost will bring him (John xvi. 4). This is where he is safest and happiest,—this is where he most glorifies God. Blessed is that man whose every fear, doubt, anxiety, struggle, fall, and victory, issues in endearing to him the blood of the Lamb.

But although Joseph had many brethren, yet was he the well-beloved son, not only because she that bare him was Rachel, but also because he was the son of Jacob's old age. And of that love he appears to have been worthy, as indications of a converted heart early began to appear. He was no fit companion of his wicked brethren, save but to serve as a check upon their practices. Would they sometimes make him a confident of their designs, and seek to obtain him as an accomplice? Their efforts were vain; his heaven-born soul recoiled at their proposals. Nor did he feel his duty to end there; he felt it was his part to do his utmost to subvert the execution of their plans; and, with *that intent*, though at the expense of incurring

much obloquy and ill-will from them, he would make his father cognizant of all (Gen. xxxvii. 2). And truly gratifying it must have been to godly Jacob's heart to find that at least he had one son who was anxious at all costs to serve the God of his fathers. With what tender feelings must he have regarded him ! How often would he look up with the eye of faith to heaven, and say, I thank thee, O Jehovah, that thou hast given me such a son ! Oh, what joy must not pious parents feel when they behold their children walking in the ways of the Lord ; and oh, what infinite pain, when they see their children, their own offspring, hardening themselves in sin, and ripening for hell. How often has not that prayer escaped from sorrowing parents' hearts, "O that Ishmael might live before thee !" (Gen. xvii. 18.) Let such pray on, remembering that the desire wrought into the heart by the Holy Ghost availeth much. The blessing shall indeed come, though it appear to tarry for a time. The writer knows at the present time of a christian man who, wayward enough in his youth, was converted many years after she who had often interceded for him had gone to stand before the throne.

The complacency with which Jacob regarded Joseph was exhibited in an unwise manner. He arrayed him in a coat of curious texture and exquisite workmanship, and which was composed of stripes of different coloured cloths. This gay present, intended doubtless as a mark of special approbation, was the means of bringing much misery to Joseph, as we shall presently see.

But, after all, that affection towards Joseph must have been peculiarly strong and ardent in the breast of the patriarch, when he, generally the most wary

and cautious of men, was blinded thereby, and led to the commission of an act so indiscreet as this was. But what comparison can be drawn, my brethren, between the love of Jacob towards his son Joseph and that of God towards Jesus Christ! What a depth of meaning there is in that expression of the apostle (Col. i. 13), where, speaking of Christ, he calls him God's "dear Son," or, rather,* "the Son of his love." So again, in Ephesians i. 6, we read that christians are accepted "in the Beloved." There appears to me something so emphatic in the omitting of the proper name, and making the participle stand instead—"the beloved One." And this term comes very near that which the Father on two different occasions was pleased to call Jesus. At his Baptism and at his Transfiguration a voice from heaven came, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. iii. 17; Matt. xvii. 5). And in that beautiful and divine prayer which the Redeemer uttered shortly before his crucifixion, he says to his Father, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John xvii. 24). John the Baptist had borne witness to this in few but expressive words: "The Father loveth the Son" (John iii. 35). Yea, God had said as much long before by the mouth of Isaiah: "Behold," says he, speaking of Jesus, "my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth" (xlii. 1). Yes, although after all there is much real love in the world among the people of God, very much real love, too, among holy angels and saints triumphant, what, when all this love is taken together, is it in comparison with His, who, whilst feeding continually so many

* Του υιου της αγαπης αυτου.

millions of streams, yet continues himself the same inexhaustible fountain,—with the love of that adorable Being who is twice declared to be “Love” itself (1 John iv. 8, 16); of him who, whether we behold him in creation, or providence, or grace, still appears the same God of love. And then, further, when we reflect how worthy that Son was of all that love, we shall understand yet more how God loves Christ. When we think of him as the co-eternal Son, who ever dwelt in the bosom of his Father, who was ever perfectly happy in his Father’s love; when we think of him as the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person; we feel God must indeed love him, since he beholds in that Son another Self; that as God loves himself, so he must love his Son, for that Son is his very self, his express image. When we look at Jesus as the Mediator, we equally see God may well love Christ. That with respect to God, he is God’s chosen (Isaiah xlii. 1; 1 Peter ii. 6); that Jesus always did that which pleased him (John viii. 29); that when God would redeem a people for the glory of his name, Jesus delighted to undertake the task, and to accomplish his will (Psalm xl. 8); and that then, in his Mediatorial capacity, he sought not his own will, nor his own glory, but his Father’s, delighting to do his service, and esteeming that to be his very meat (John v. 30; John iv. 34); and that all that stupendous work which his Father had given him to do, he finished, though at the expense of his own life (John xvii. 4; John xix. 30): or, whether we look at him as the Mediator with men, that the apostle is so amazed at the greatness of his love, that he declares *it passeth knowledge* (Eph. iii. 19); that his love was

so great to us, that inspired men, unable to find a full expressive word adequately to tell out that love, with intense emphasis denominate him, "him that loved us" (Rom. viii. 37; Rev. i. 5); that his whole progress, from the manger to the cross, and from the cross to the Father's throne, was one untiring exhibition of his yet unknown love; yea, that before he was born he longed to be with us, to be one of us (Prov. viii. 31); and that when he had become incarnate, he ardently longed to be crucified for us (Luke xii. 50); and that now he has ascended to heaven on our behalf, he is longing to be with us again that he may receive us for ever to himself (John xiv. 3). Oh, my brethren, when we look at all this love of Christ towards his Father and towards us, do we not feel that he is, indeed, worthy of all his Father's love? Yes, God loves his Son, and well he may. And that Son loves his Father, and well, too, he may. Yes, and they needed not us, nor any creatures, to make them happier in themselves, and in the mutual love of one another. No, the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and, therefore, no *accession* of love or happiness can ever come to them. God is infinitely happy in himself, and ever must be. And why, then, he chose that we should be sharers of that divine love, my brethren, I cannot say. Nor could Moses. He once tried, but left off where he began. "The Lord," says he, "did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people" (Deut. vii. 7). Here, then, we have one reason why the Lord did not love them, and many more might easily be added. But he goes on, "*but because*"—because of what?

"the Lord loved you." He can get no further. And so by a most sweet and blessed tautology he teaches us that the cause of the Lord's love to us can never be discovered external from himself.

It is, indeed, very consoling to the conscience of the believer to reflect on the love and complacency with which God regards Christ. Were it more frequently a theme of meditation, the conscience of the believer would not, perhaps, be so often terrified with the holiness and justice of God as it is. The Lord the Holy Spirit might be pleased to grant to such a conscience so glorious and vivid a display of the preciousness, the fulness, and the completeness, of the vicarious work of the Redeemer, as should not only perfectly allay every fear, but lead the astonished soul rapturously to exclaim, "In the Lord I have righteousness and strength" (John xvi. 14; Isa. xlv. 24). If such a soul did but understand that the atonement of Christ was the Father's own purpose (Acts iv. 27, 28), would he any longer fear as to its adequacy to his case? Would he not feel, If God in full view of my sins has already beforehand provided a Lamb which could take them away, must there not be a suitableness in Jesus even for me? Inasmuch as God never does anything by halves, must not the preciousness of his sufferings infinitely outweigh the vileness and the magnitude of my transgressions? Draw nearer, then, oh, my soul. Contemplate nearer this Lamb of God's providing. My sins are great. But the august Sufferer is he who maintains creation. But there is something peculiar in my sins,—their dye is so deep, so crimson. They have been committed against such light, and *such base ingratitude* is apparent in them. But yet

did not God know all this? And yet did he not say, "They shall be as white as snow"? (Isa. i. 18.) Has not his blood washed out the stains of Magdalene, of Saul, and of Manasseh? (Rev. vii. 14.) But still my sins,—yet, hush, look at the Crucified. See how he writhes and is in agony. And he is the only begotten and well-beloved Son of God. He is that Being whom the Father loves with all his heart. Yes, but you cannot say that his inflicting such suffering on him is any proof of that love? Indeed! Was not the coat of many colours a proof to Joseph how much Jacob loved him? And did not God, in love to Jesus, prepare for him a body? (Heb. x. 5.) And was not that body prepared for him in order that *thereby* he might be capable of suffering? (Heb. ii. 9.) But wherein was the inflicting such sufferings on his Son a proof of his love to him? How else could Jesus have obtained his bride? How else could he have brought "many sons to glory"? Then that sufferer is God's elect in whom his soul delighteth? (Isa. xlii. 1.) Even so. Oh, how precious, my soul, must those sufferings be! Say, do thy sins exceed in value those sufferings, or do not rather those sufferings atone for thy sins? Here is on the one side this sin, that transgression, that base return for favours received; and then on the other side, there is the Eternal Son of God, appointed by thy Father to undertake thy rescue and to die in thy stead. Here is that Son offering himself willingly as the propitiation of thy sins; here is the Father, so intense is his satisfaction at the manner in which Christ proceeds with his work, at two different times declaring he is well-pleased with him, and when that work is *done*, *himself* raising the great Redeemer from

the dead, his justice *itself* unbarring the prison doors of the surety, in evidence that it is satisfied with the payment of the debt (Rom. iv. 24, 25); and here is the divine sufferer exclaiming, "I thirst,"—I want to drink to the very bottom of the cup of wrath,—I will not leave one single drop in,—is there any more, oh, my Father, yet to suffer? if there be, I thirst, give it to me; and then when the cup was empty, when the curse was exhausted, when the sin was made an end of, when damnation was drained dry, then he cried out in exultation and in triumph, "It is finished," and bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Oh, my soul, as God is satisfied, as Christ is so triumphant, darrest thou to rest on that done and finished work? "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

But here we must observe something in Joseph to which there is nothing corresponding in Jesus. We may often backslide and sin against him, often deal unkindly with him, but never shall we, never can we, provoke him to be unkind to us. He has to put up with far more from us than any earthly friend or brother would do. But never has he a single hard word for us, never anything but the tenderest, most patient, most forgiving love. Much less will he ever accuse us to the Father. No, he is our brother,—and such a brother! Do we do wrong? he takes the guilt and the punishment upon himself. Our sins and our backslidings he indeed hates far more than Joseph did those of his brethren; but, then, because he loves us, that which he hates so greatly, and which he holds in such perfect abhorrence, he folds upon himself, he makes it his clothing, in order that Divine Justice, leaving us unscathed, may punish him (2 Cor. v. 7).

Hence, as our substitute, we read of him in one place clothed with a purple robe, emblematic of our sins, and his blood streaming from his sacred head down on that typical robe, covering and washing away those sins (John xix. 5). Is this like our Joseph accusing us? But let us look at some particular instances of his treatment of us. Thus, look at him in the garden of Eden, after the guilty pair have sinned. There are they standing in terror before him, their justly offended Judge. And, hark! Does he begin to pronounce the awful sentence of their condemnation? Not so. He does, indeed, condemn, but not them; no, their tempter and *himself*: "The seed of the woman," says he, alluding to himself, "shall bruise the serpent's head;" shall, that is, more than undo what Satan has now done; "and he," continues the Judge, "shall bruise my heel;" that is, In rescuing you from the condign punishment of your transgression, and in effecting your salvation, I myself must be bruised,—I your deliverer must die. Then when he appeared on earth, having become a partaker of flesh and blood that he might be like his brethren (Heb. ii. 14); and when his inveterate foes gathered round him, and betrayed their enmity in every way they could, did he grow tired of his undertaking,—did he accuse them? Listen to his words: "Do not think," said he to them, "that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust" (John v. 45). When at last his enemies accomplished their designs, and nailed him to the cross, then appeared still more strikingly how far removed he was from accusing them: "Father," he cries, "forgive them, for they know not what they do." Oh,

my brethren, how thrilling must have been that spectacle at that solemn moment to every angelic beholder. There was the Divine Mediator, robed in flesh and blood, covered with the sins of his elect, and, in consequence thereof, shedding his warm heart's blood; and it was then that wondrous prayer escaped from his affectionate bosom, his bowels yearning over his beloved murderers: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do:" whilst his transfixed body, his crown of thorns, his pierced side, his mangled back, his shed blood, his soul desertion, all accompany, and second, and back, that prayer, and cause that prayer to re-descend in showers of untold blessings upon his persecutors' heads. Yes, Divine Saviour! Piacular Victim! that prayer shall be heard and answered. Not one for whom thou didst then pray, for whom thou didst then suffer, shall be lost. They shall *all* be forgiven, converted, and saved. How soon after didst thou behold the first fruits of the success of thy prayer, when "a great company of the priests," thy veriest enemies formerly, and who doubtless were many of them present at thy crucifixion, "were obedient to the faith," and bowed their knees and hearts to thee as their Lord and as their God (Acts vi. 7). Thou accuse thy brethren! How altogether foreign to thy nature! Thy blood speaketh better things than that of Abel (Heb. xii. 24). Abel's blood did indeed accuse Cain, and cried against him (Gen. iv. 10); but thy blood, oh, thou martyred Lamb of God, thy blood defends us, thy blood casts our real accuser out of heaven (Rev. xii. 10), and makes it *just* that we should be forgiven (1 John i. 9).

Yes, my brethren, this very imperfection in the

parallelism between Joseph and Jesus is most comforting. Joseph accused, but Jesus acquits by accusing himself, and suffering in our stead. And so, if you behold the other types of Jesus, and mark wherever the type does not tally, how entirely it is because the glory of Jesus excelleth. Abraham, for instance, did but offer his only son Isaac in a figure; but God offered up his only Son, and Jesus offered up himself, in fact and in very deed. The high priest, too, did but continually offer up the same *soi disant* sacrifice which could never take away sin; but this man, after that he had offered up one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down on the right hand of God (Heb. x. 11, 12). And Aaronic high priests were many, because they were mortal; but he, because "death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. vi. 9), hath the priesthood unchangeably (Heb. vii. 24).

Jesus, my brethren, is so divinely glorious, that no type can fully represent him. Are his mediatorial death and resurrection to be portrayed before the eyes of the church that was in the wilderness? Not one but two goats are necessary for this purpose (Lev. xvi. 7). Is that church to be taught the momentous truth, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission" of sin? How many typical persons and ceremonies are needed for this, let the whole book of Leviticus testify. But Jesus gathers them all up in his own individual person; he is at once Altar (Heb. xiii. 10), Victim (John i. 29), Priest (Heb. x. 11, 12), and High Priest (Heb. ix. 11). Once more, is the manner of his life on earth to be written for the study of his redeemed people? Not one but four evangelists are necessary. One presents us with one aspect of that

life, and another with another. A landscape we know presents different appearances to different beholders,—and even different appearances to the same beholders, when it is seen from another point of view,—and thus each evangelist gives one side of our Lord's life and character, and the whole four combined give his full portraiture. They do not present us four gospels, but *one* gospel, *one* Jesus, as seen from four points of view.

In the course of our meditations on the life of Joseph we shall probably find other discrepancies between the Type and Antitype, as well as that one which we have already pointed out. But here for a time let us pause, and let us seek that what already has been said may be to our profit by leading us to know more of Him, “whom to know is life eternal” (John xvii. 3.)

II.

THE HATED BROTHER.

"And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words."—Gen. xxxvii. 8.

It is a very wonderful and solemn thing, my beloved brethren, that the fall of man, though such abundant and melancholy proofs of it are continually occurring in the world, should yet be received so hesitatingly and guardedly by the worshipers of free will, and so unblushingly denied by the idolaters of human reason. Witnesses of its truth everywhere abound. That fearful catalogue presented by St. Paul, in Gal. v. 19—21, is no dead letter yet. From the infant, which exhibits the bad passions of its heart as plainly as it can by the fretful cry and the clenched fist, to the hoary head, prone as it is to covetousness, obstinacy, and discontent, all are living specimens of its truth. From the practised and conscience-hardened sinner to the strong believer well experienced in that terrible warfare described in Romans vii. by one who had worn the helmet and wielded the sword for five and twenty years, all, all, by the emotions of their hearts and the actions of their lives loudly proclaim, "Adam, in ruining himself, *ruined us too.*" Come, and ascend with me

this adjacent hill. Now from this eminence how beautiful is the landscape presented to us! Here everything conspires to charm and ravish us, and to lead us to adore the wise, and good, and beneficent Creator. The sky, itself so serene and peaceful, is reflecting its tinted blue in the sparkling river beneath. And the gentle rippling and subdued murmuring of the latter as it winds along its course, joined with the merry warbling of the feathered race in that noble forest, give life and animation to the scene. How sweetly the sounds of the bells of yonder village church blend and harmonise with the whole. The spire rises but a little above the tall and majestic trees. How picturesquely is the whole village situated! What an air of peace, and quiet, and happiness, appears to reign throughout it! See how the smoke from the chimney of that ivy-clad cottage curls about in every fantastic shape, and seems to skip and dance from tree to tree so cheerily. The cottage itself, how nice and snug it looks. Doubtless its occupants are very happy. The whole village surely is as one large family. Ah, no! How terribly untrue! Its inhabitants are *fallen, totally fallen*, from their allegiance to their Creator, and in consequence are "hateful and hating one another" (Titus iii. 3). Who can tell of all the heart-burnings, and secret jealousies, and open enmities, existing among the inhabitants of that seemingly so peaceful village! Yea, how many envyings, and strifes, and emulations, are ever and anon springing up and agitating the breasts of that family resident in that sylvan cottage! Discord and contention oftener find a home there than love and unity. And if there be any unity, it seems *principally* apparent in this, an entire forgetfulness of

the God that made them, and in whose hand their breath is. And such it will continue, unless the Spirit of God renews one of their hearts. And then will the latent passions of their hearts against God and against the faintest appearance of his image more fully manifest themselves than ever before (Matt. x. 36). It is not at all improbable that that new-born soul will have ultimately to leave that roof altogether, so keen is the hatred with which he is now regarded. And this, my brethren, is a picture not of one village only, but of every one; not in one land merely, but in every even professedly christian land. Hatred, in some or all of its various forms, is the characteristic of fallen man in his unrenewed state (Rom. viii. 7). Hatred of others, specially of the living God, with enormous self-love, is his prevailing trait in all climes and in all ages.

And as it is now, so it has ever been. Surely if unity and love might have been expected to have been resident in any family, most of all so in such a family as that of the patriarch Jacob, him who as a prince had power with God and had prevailed. Instead of which we find that old man himself was guilty of undue partiality towards the son of his old age, and as to his other sons, that Joseph they hated so bitterly that they could not speak peaceably to him. As to Joseph himself, he appears to have borne this unkind treatment as best he could, probably comforting himself with the assurance that his father at all events loved him. One night, however, after he had retired to rest, it pleased God to comfort him by two dreams; the second an expansion and corroboration of the first. It was harvest time, and he had been thrown much into the company of his brethren. Their churlishness

and asperity towards him had caused him, when the toils of the day were over, to retire to his rest with an aching heart. Still he had hope. The angel that had redeemed his father from so many evils and perplexities (Gen. xlviii. 16) would surely redeem him. His sorrow hinders him from sleeping soundly, and he dreams. He fancies he is still in the harvest-field with his brethren binding sheaves; when, lo, his sheaf stands erect, and the sheaves of his brethren stand round about and make obeisance to his sheaf. He awakes, and finds it is a dream. The stars are shining brightly above his head, and seem to whisper to his troubled breast, "Fear not, the God that made us will protect you!" He dreams again, and, lo, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars, make obeisance to him. If he was bewildered by his first dream, he is utterly amazed by the second. He knew that God was pleased to reveal his will oftentimes in dreams, and he felt that his had an import in them. But you will perhaps ask me, my beloved brethren, whether God ever reveals his will in dreams now. Far be it from me, indeed, to say that he does not. The word of God plainly testifies that he does. But, then, be it also far from me to say that every dream of a mere disordered imagination has a divine signification in it. Probably it was more usual with God to reveal his will by dreams, visions, and ghosts, then, than it is now, for this reason: now men have the perfect will of God revealed to them in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, but in those days they had not. All the Bible those holy patriarchs had to guide them was that single promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." This was their pole-star, their

chart, their consolation. How continually, we may well imagine, would they sit down under the shade of some spreading tree and muse upon these words! How oft would they form the subject of conversation! How would they be ever seeking to penetrate deeper into those blessed truths contained in such mysterious language! And then, when after the lapse of two thousand years another promise was added to Abraham, in which, as St. Paul declares, the whole gospel is contained (Gal. iii. 8), would they not oftentimes compare the two promises together, and with the truths involved in those sacrifices which they had been divinely taught to offer? and would they not, feeling the necessity, seek for further light from God, and be grateful when that light was given them, whether it came by the Logos, by an angel, by an audible voice, by a prophet, or by a dream?

How any one who believes in the simple word of truth can deny that God is pleased to vouchsafe to individuals at times dreams and visions which contain divine information, I am at a loss to determine. For Holy Scripture authoritatively declares that such is one of his ways (Job xxxiii. 15, with Job iv. 13—21). I grant, and most readily too, that most of the fancies men have upon their beds are mere delusions. But then, I ask, "Who shall limit the holy one of Israel?" I am quite sure that if he does convey any instruction in a dream or vision it will invariably be found in accordance with his holy word, and if they are evidently antagonistic, the dream may, yea, *must* be rejected (Gal. i. 8). But I am equally sure that Scripture encourages, and well authenticated instances establish, *the position, that* God is thus pleased at times

to reveal his will. Thus it is mentioned as one of the errors of the Sadducees that they did not believe in ghosts (Acts xxiii. 8). When the Saviour appeared to his disciples walking on the water, they cried out, we are told, with fear, supposing he was a ghost (Mark vi. 49). And then when he replied, he did not deny the existence of ghosts, but merely said, "It is I,"—that is, I am no ghost. And upon another occasion, when they experienced the same fear, he replied to their fears in this manner, "Handle me and see, for a spirit (or ghost) hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke xxiv. 39). As much as to say, "To prove that I am no ghost touch me and see, for a ghost although visible is intangible." And with respect to dreams the prophet Joel has declared that there shall be many when the Spirit of God is poured out (Joel ii. 28). And St. Peter says that this passage receives under the christian dispensation a first fulfilment (Acts ii. 17). Hence we find more visions and dreams recorded by the pen of inspiration in the Acts of the Apostles, than in all the other books of the Bible put together. What Colonel Gardiner saw,* and what a highly venerated lady of Krummacher's acquaintance heard, and for the authenticity of whose story he† undertakes to vouch, are sufficient proofs that God does still occasionally make use of these means in the manifestation of his will.

When Joseph awoke in the morning and thought upon his dreams, they seemed to portend more than he could almost dare to believe. What, lord of his brethren,—but how? He knew not. This he did

* Doddridge's Life of Colonel Gardiner, page 33.

† Krummacher's *Elisba*, part ii., page 265.

know, that such was the will of God. But then his father too, to treat him with such respect ! Wherefore should his father behave thus towards him ? When would these things come to pass ? Neither did he know this, all he knew was that such was the will of God, and as for the time and manner of the fulfilment, he felt happy in leaving them with God. But then these enchanting though bewildering thoughts were cruelly invaded and disturbed, by the remembrance that he must again encounter and endure that day the haughtiness and dictatorial behaviour of his brethren in the harvest field. Oh, how this terrified him ! Suddenly a thought strikes him, and he resolves to act upon it. He is no longer afraid of meeting them. He joins them boldly, nor is his heart chilled as it was wont to be when their fierce eyes meet his. Summoning up all his courage, he, with a gentle smile and in simple language, innocently makes them partakers of his secret. "Hear," says he, "I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed : for behold we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright, and behold your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf." You are aware, my brethren, how this ingenuous frankness of Joseph is generally construed, that it is generally attributed to vanity. But methinks here they wrong him : for would he, just merely to gratify his vanity, have been willing to have rendered himself still more odious to his brethren ? I think not. Does not the explanation I have given of his behaviour set before us in a clearer light his admitted piety and faith in God, as well as his ill-requited affection for his brethren ? *It is as if he had said, "You hate me now, oh,*

my brethren, but God hath shewed me that I shall be your lord, and then you will not hate me, but seek and entreat my favour. Now you cannot accost me without bitterness, but then shall you bow your necks and hearts. Submission, and love, and gratitude to me, shall then take entire possession of your souls. And if this shall certainly be the case then—and it shall, since God himself has told it me—why cannot we be friends now? Oh, then, put away, I entreat you, your bitterness and ill-will at once! Be kind to me, also, even now. Begin now!” He speaks, and his eyes are meanwhile anxiously scanning their faces, to see what effect his dreams and his words are having upon them. When, lo, contrary to his expectations, as he proceeds, their countenances fall, a dark and terrible scowl covers them. Envy, jealousy, passion, pride, derision, are all too plainly to be seen there. One time he is interrupted by derisive pity, at another by a coarse and brutal laugh. Scarcely is he allowed to finish the story of his dream, though uttered so winningly and so affectionately, ere they sarcastically and peremptorily reply, “Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?” Their passion and their pride equally prevent them from saying more. With cruel settled purposes of malice they turn away from him, leaving the dejected and unhappy youth to regret in silence his ill-placed confidence.

Yes, my brethren, the Lord’s people have ever been a hated people. Behold any saint of God in any period of the world’s history, and you will find that the children of the devil have ever been his cordial and determined enemies (Gen. iii. 15). So entirely is

this the case that Christ lays it down as a divine axiom that, if we are of the world, the world will love us ; but that if we are his, the world will hate us (John xv. 19 ; Luke vi. 26). Abel was but the first of a long, long line of martyrs. From his time to that of Zacharias, son of Barachias, thousands were slain for the sake of the God whom they served (Matt. xxiii. 35). And from the time of Stephen until the present day, *the saints of God in every age have been a persecuted people*. Sometimes their enemies have been so reined in and bridled by the Lord, that they could not manifest their hatred at all, but have been forced to assume the smile and semblance of friendship, the reality of which even then they were far from feeling. Sometimes, again, out of the abundance of their hearts their mouths have spoken ; and, oh, how much is not the tongue capable of doing in the way of aspersion, calumny, misrepresentation, and exaggeration ! How much poignant pain cannot that little member cause by the mere circulation of unpleasant truths. Oftentimes, however, the Lord has seen good to let them persecute his people even unto death. And oh, then, with what ferocity have they gone about their work ! How many abusive epithets have they heaped upon them ! This changing of the nickname has been done partly in order to hide and dissemble the inveterate character of their own hatred, and partly, because that it happened in process of time, the opprobrium of the former name wore off, through the confession unto blood of many witnesses. But, however, though their names were changed, they have ever been the same people that were persecuted. In these last ages merely, even since *Christ has come*, they have suffered as Galileans,

as Nazarenes, as Christians, as Athanasians, as Paulicians, as Waldenses, as Lollards, as Hussites, as Lutherans, as Protestants, as Sacramentarians, as Calvinists, as Huguenots, as Saints, sometimes too as Antinomians, and yet once more shall they suffer as Galileans and as Christians. All kinds of charges too, from the most ridiculous and absurd to the most tremendous and awful, have been laid against them and seriously believed. They have been accused as those who turn the world upside down (Acts xvii. 6); as disloyal (Luke xxiii. 2); as mad (Acts xxvi. 4); as blasphemers against God (Acts vi. 11). And their punishments have been as various as the crimes with which they have been accused. "They have been shot, stabbed, stoned, drowned, beheaded, hanged, drawn, quartered, impaled, burnt or buried alive, roasted on spits, baked in ovens, thrown into furnaces, tumbled over precipices, cast from the top of towers, sunk in mire and pits, starved with hunger and cold, hung on tenter hooks, suspended by the hair of the head and by the hands or feet, stuffed and blown up with gunpowder, ripped with swords and sickles, tied to the tails of horses, dragged over streets and sharp flints, broken on the wheel, beaten on anvils with hammers, blown with bellows, bored with hot irons, torn piecemeal by red-hot pincers, slashed with knives, hacked with axes, hewed with chisels, planed with planes, pricked with forks, stuck from head to foot with pins, choked with water, lime, rags, filth, or mangled pieces of their own bodies crammed down their throats, shut up in caves and dungeons, tied to stakes, nailed to trees, tormented with lighted matches, scalding oil, burning pitch, melted lead, &c. They have been flayed alive, had

their flesh scraped and torn from their bones, they have been trampled and danced upon till their bowels have been forced out, their guts have been tied to trees and pulled forth by degrees, their heads twisted with cords till the blood or even their eyes started out, strings have been drawn through their noses, and they have been led about like swine, and butchered like sheep. Persons have been compelled to lay violent hands on their dearest friends, to kill or to cast into the fire their parents, husbands, wives, and children, or to look on whilst they have been most cruelly and shamefully abused."* These are a few of the cruelties which have been practised upon them, and much severer than any of these I could yet enumerate, as death by the pendulum. But in all these cases they have still been the same people, all along the same hated, persecuted, and despised people. Yea, ever since the fall of man has this been the case. All that the children of God are undergoing now, or have undergone, or shall undergo ere their mighty Redeemer comes again to receive them for ever to his bosom, all are but reappearances and further developments of that self-same spirit which existed in the bosom of Cain towards his righteous brother Abel.

If this be true concerning the children of God generally, that they are a hated and persecuted people, especially was this the case with respect to the Son of God. Yes, startling as it may appear, it is nevertheless a fact, that all the opposition which has ever been made to religion since the world began to the present day, has been particularly leveled against the only begotten Son of God. The people of God are

* *Bruce's Free Thoughts on Popery*, page 187.

marks the blows of which Jesus had himself felt. So true is that which the poet writes :

“ Christ and his church are into one transformed
Colossal person, spirit, life, and frame,
And fellowship and feeling: Let that church
Suffer a pang—the Saviour feels it too!
Touch but a member and you thrill the Head
With shock electric on his throne perceived;
And, therefore, tyrants! when ye wound a hair
Of God’s anointed, up to heaven your wrong
Ascendeth, and the heart of Jesus strikes.”

So, again, look at all the heresies which the devil has brought into the church and into the world. Weigh them well, you will find they are all intended to detract from the glory and steal rays from the crown of the Divine Redeemer. Hence it is that the apostles in their writings term the propagators of these heresies “*Antichrists* ;” in one word presenting to us the motive of Satan in inventing, and of the heretics in propagating, their delusions. Look, for instance, at Popery,—what is it but a vast conspiracy against the Son of God? Observe how the inspired penmen present in marked contrast the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, and the mystery of iniquity, the son of perdition manifesting himself as God (1 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Thes. ii. 4.) What is the Pope? The devil’s caricature of the manifested God. Well, then, is he called the Antichrist, *ο αντιχριστος* (2 Thes. ii. 4). Or look again at infidelity,—what is it but a scheme of continued and pertinacious opposition to the manifested God? Give up the divinity of the man Christ Jesus, and infidels of every class will embrace you as friends. Even the unhappy atheist himself cares but little *because* you maintain that there is a

God, unless you also maintain that he concerns himself with the affairs of men. But tell him that God loves the world, and that he so loved it that he has given his only begotten Son, then will his hostility quickly appear. And therefore I maintain, without the slightest fear of refutation, that all the opposition that has ever been made to Christianity, its doctrines and practices, and to the people of God, has been particularly leveled at, and directed against, the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

When your minds, my beloved brethren, shall have been fully enabled to admit and embrace the above position, you will have received a clue which shall guide you safely, by the blessing of the Holy Ghost, the glorifier of Christ, through all the wilfully entangled and labyrinthian controversies of the present day, to the full knowledge and enjoyment of the truth as it is in Jesus. You will be enabled to look down on all the heats of parties and jealousies of contending sects unmoved, save but gratefully to exclaim, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. xi. 25). Yes, ponder this position well; any doctrine that tends to dishonour Christ is a lie, and so you may fearlessly reject it; any doctrine that glorifies him is a truth, and as such you may cordially receive it. Thus, then, with your spiritually enlightened eyes you will not long hesitate as to which is the truth of God, free-will or "free," that is undeserved, grace; between random salvation and effectual calling with final preservation,—between High Churchism, as it is commonly* under-

* I say, High Churchism, "as it is *commonly* understood," that is to say,

stood, which invests a set of sinful men with tremendous powers in heaven, and earth, and hell, and Bible Christianity, which makes Christ all, and all in all, and man nothing but sinful dust and ashes, and so on. Can you, my brethren, follow me thus far? Well, then, come, and let us ascend one step higher yet.

Not only has every attempt that has ever been made against real religion, whether by the invention and circulation of heresy, or by persecution of the truth and of those that maintain it, by Satan and the wicked world, been particularly aimed against the Son of God, but Scripture also teaches us, at least inferentially, that that prime rebellion made in heaven against its Almighty King by those "whose name is legion," was especially raised against the second Person of the adorable Trinity. For, first, Jude (6) expressly informs us that they were and are angels, and that they had rank and dignity in heaven—*την εαυτων αρχην*—"Their own principedom." Then we find, secondly, that the angels which are in heaven now are "elected" (1 Tim. v. 21). Now, wherever there is choice there must also be refusal. Hence we gather that there were other angels in heaven once besides those that are there now. Is it not, then, fair to infer that those

Apostolical Succession, and such like trash. For my own part, I do not see how such doctrine is "high" at all, which makes it necessary, for the very existence of a church, that one ordained by a bishop shall be present, thus tying its very being to poor sinful mortals. Scripture says, that where two or three are met together in the name of Jesus, there is the Redeemer himself present, there, in other words, is a church, there is a part of that one only church which was elected by God the Father, redeemed by God the Son, and is being sanctified by God the Holy Ghost, and shall, every member of it, be brought home to glory for ever. Him who belongs to this church, and who has been led to feel his union and membership with it by the Holy Ghost, and to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour by a consistent life, him I call the really High Churchman.

angels which are now fallen were once their compeers! Then, thirdly, we find that those angels which did fall, fell through sin (2 Peter ii. 4). We have now got thus far, that Satan and his band are angels that fell through sin from being the equals and companions of the very highest angels in heaven. Yea, does not the name of Lucifer, which Satan appears to have borne when in heaven (Isa. xiv. 12), almost imply that he was among the very highest in rank and office among the angelic hierarchs? God is light (1 John i. 5), and Satan then was "Lucifer," that is, "the carrier of light," as if he had been wont to receive the commands and instructions of the Most High, and to carry them to his inferior associates. If this be true, which I own I am not certain of, though I submit it looks very probable, does it not prepare us to surmise what his sin consisted in, rebellious arrogance and presumptuous ambition? And does not this remarkably agree with the context of the holy prophet (Isa. xiv. 12—15), wherein Satan's sin and fall is poetically used to illustrate the sin and destruction of the Babylonian monarch? You will permit me, my brethren, to quote the whole passage. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" That is, Lucifer thinned the ranks of the holy angels by making them accomplices of his sin, and the king of Babylon, who is here compared to him, weakened and destroyed nations of men not a few. The inspired seer goes on, "Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven," (that is, the very heaven of heavens where God dwells, 1 Tim. vi. 16,) "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the

mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north : I will ascend above the heights of the clouds ; I will be *like the Most High*. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." Here the haughtiness of the king of Babylon is ably portrayed, and compared to the pride and towering ambition of that Satan who was once Lucifer and the prince of the thrones of heaven. Well, then, if pride was his sin, as I think we may reasonably infer from this passage, what was the *occasion* of this sin of his ? If he was once the highest creature in heaven, how could he be guilty of pride ? We have already seen that Satan in all his machinations now aims at the glory of Christ. We have seen that it is against Christ he appears to bear an unceasing grudge. We know that the Son of God was manifested for this especial purpose, that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John iii. 8). We know, too, that so perfect is the mutual antagonism between Christ and Satan that the apostle asks, as if agreement between them were the very extreme of impossibilities, "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor. vi. 15). Now put all this together and reflect, is not all this evidence cumulative to the point whither we are tending ? Does it not almost inevitably lead one to the conclusion that the great angel's rebellion was made against the manifested God—the Man-God—the man that should, in his mediatorial capacity as Redeemer of God's elect, be yet nearer to the everlasting throne than even Satan was ? We know that God sometimes acquaints his angels with his intentions and with passing events.* Is it not,

* Luke xv. 6, 7. The angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. How do they know when this is the case ? The parallelism of the two first para-

therefore, lawful to suppose that God would inform them of his design to create another race of creatures, who should be a little lower than themselves, and that those creatures would fall from their allegiance, and that his Son to redeem them would take their nature, and that it was his will that all in heaven should bow, should adore this man Christ Jesus? (Phil. ii. 10.) Yea, more, do we not find it expressly written, that when God introduced* the Messiah to creation, he said, "Let all the angels of God worship him"? (Heb. i. 6; Psalm xcvi. 7.) Is it not very reasonable, from all the Scriptures we have quoted, to conclude that it was *then* when Satan refused; that he, so great a creature, could not brook that a man should be nearer the throne than himself, that he who, as we have seen, fell through pride and seeking equality with God, could not bring himself to yield adoration to *another* Person, the eternal Son of the eternal Father? I admit that all this is not much more than inferential, but yet this supposition so harmoniously joins into one compacted whole all the passages of Scripture which treat of Satan's fall, so entirely concurs with all we have seen of his devices against the Son of God now, that I have no hesitation in saying that the man who peremptorily

bles in this chapter shews. The man having found his lost sheep, and the woman having found her lost piece of silver, call their neighbours and friends together, saying, "I have found," &c. May we not hence conclude that God calls the angels together when his Spirit has converted a sinner, when one of his poor lost sheep is restored to the fold of the good Shepherd?

* "Heb. i. 6 has 'when he bringeth in,' which, so far as the *language* is concerned, might refer to the birth of the Messiah, but it is evident from the whole connection that the writer means to refer to something that is *said* in the Old Testament. . . . The meaning of the phrase, 'when he bringeth in,' therefore, I take to be, when he *introduces him*, when he makes him known to the world, to wit, by the declaration which the apostle proceeds *immediately to quote*."—*Barnes in loc.*

its it, and persists in calling the whole idea merely ironic, yea, who does not feel that there is strong ability from Scripture in its favour, that man, I has not yet learned to compare Scripture with pture, and to bow to its every word with that prod reverence which is its due.

ence, then, it appears, that the insane cry, "We not have this man to reign over us" (Luke xix. is by no means new, but that it was heard in en before learned on earth. Shalt thou indeed i over us?—shalt thou indeed have dominion over —is the language of people, ministers, senators, polins, princes, hypocrites, yea, and churches too. s is hated and rejected by every individual of that d that lieth in the embrace of the wicked one— ο πονηρῶ (1 John v. 19). Lying in his bosom, it drunk largely of his rebellious spirit. With God e abstract the world would not so much find fault, e would but confine himself to heaven, and let lone. But with God manifested in the flesh, a man who brings the whole Godhead down to his effectually discovers and arouses their enmity. man hath seen God at any time;"—so far so good, the world, we do not want, "the only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath told out"—ἐξηγγασατο (John i. 18). Now the opposi- quickly appears. Men love the darkness,—they the light. But if they must have a god at hand, how much wretched wriggling does the world e, so that it may not have the Christ of God! t at the degrading idolatry of heathenism. Why so enormously sinful, as it appears to be from the of God? Because its wooden and golden gods

are gross libels on him who is the only real and faithful "image of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15). Idolatry is not so much directed against the first Person of the Trinity; no, but it is a cruel caricature of Him who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the "express image of his person" (Heb. i. 3). Mahommetanism, too, is simply this—the rejection of the holy and divine Lamb of God, and the substitution of a debauchee in his stead. And Popery, as we have pointed out, is leveled particularly against Christ; and, oh, how many ways there are in which it rejects Christ! Instead of Christ the priest, it has its own priests; instead of his precious blood which cleanseth from all sin, it has invented the fires of purgatory; instead of him the human God, it prefers a breadden one; instead of him the one great Intercessor, it has made whole regiments of factitious saints to usurp his place. In its ordinary worship, the Virgin Mary occupies that self-same place in its devotees' affections that Christ alone should fill. Instead of King Jesus ever present with his church, it has dared to foist "you infirm old man," the Pope, into his place. Again, Tractarianism—its essence is to enthrone something which it calls "the Church," rather than Christ. Then others worship their own reason; others their own morality; some one thing, and some another; only, whatever it be, yet all concur in one universal shout, "Not *this* man, not *this* man; we will not have *this* man to reign over us."

Oh, most pitiable infatuation! Oh, monstrous ignorance! Oh, the immensity, the entireness of the fall! Alas, for the blinding, stupifying, hardening character of sin! Whom is it they reject? Whom is it they thus loathe? It is Thee, O "thou that art

fairer than the children of men" (Psalm xlv. 2). It is Thee, thou "altogether lovely" One (Canticles v. 16). It is Thee, O thou precious Immanuel. It is Thee, who art loved so infinitely by thy Father, because thou art so fully worthy of that love. He knows thee, knows thee fully, and therefore loves with all his own divine love. Angels in heaven love thee much, because they know thee; they love thee more and more, the more they are enabled to see thy glory and thy love. Saints in heaven love thee more than angels can, because thy free, sovereign love has granted to them to dive more deeply into the riches of thy grace and of thy love. And thou hast a people on earth who love thee, because thou hast manifested thyself unto them; and they desire to love thee with all their heart, and with all their mind, and soul, and strength. They want to give thee all, for they feel thou art worthy of more than all. Nay, none love thee as thou deservest to be loved, save thy Father and thy Spirit. All the love of all thy saints and of all thy angels together, is but a drop compared with thine—wider, deeper than the universe itself. Oh, for much more love to love thee with! Myriads of burning hearts cannot love thee enough; ten thousand times ten thousand harps cannot adequately shew forth thy praise. As for thee, O Lord, "thou art worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. v. 12). But, ah, it grieves those who know thee at all, to see thee insulted, thee scorned, thee rejected! Ah, wherefore should they thus hate thee? Is it because the darkness hath blinded their eyes? (2 Cor. iv. 4—6.) Thy preciousness, thy graciousness, thy

goodness, thine unutterable love, no tongue can tell, no heart can conceive (1 Cor. ii. 9). Oh, that thou wast universally loved ! Oh, when shall that glorious, that blessed time come, when thou shalt be the adored of all creation ? Lord, shortly accomplish the number of thine elect, and hasten thy kingdom. Do not be long, Lord, dearest Saviour, before thou comest again with the rainbow round about thine head (Rev. iv. 3), and all creation intent upon thy look. Oh, what a sweet day that will be, when the eyes of all creation shall be fixed on thee in terrible anxiety or in speechless adoration. Dear, good Lord, hasten that time when "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them," shall be heard "saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever" (Rev. v. 13).

III.

THE BROTHER'S SEARCH.

"And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan."—Gen. xxxvii. 12—17.

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John iii. 15). A startling announcement this, my brethren. The divine, unlike all human law, reaches, you perceive, to the thoughts and intents of the heart. He who uttered these words had been wont to recline on the bosom of Jesus. *There* he had drunk deep of his spirit. *There* he had learnt the shallowness of the public sophisters of the day, who, whilst they strained

off a gnat, swallowed down a camel. *There* he had imbibed truth from the fountain head, from the great Legislator himself, who is Light and Truth. That Lawgiver had said, "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment" (Matt. v. 22). That Teacher had anew enunciated the forgotten truth that "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders," &c. (Matt. xv. 19.) He had revealed the cause of all the sins which we commit, a diseased, a sinful, a sin-loving heart. He had stripped off the various subterfuges in which we cloak our sins, he had traced the evils to their source, he had turned our "desperately wicked heart" inside out, and exposed the monsters that were nestling there to the light of day. Such declarations as these, my brethren, I repeat it, quickly dispel all our extenuations, and equivocations, and excuses, and bring forth, in all their hideousness, those sins latent in the very bottom of our hearts, and set them in the light of God's countenance. Who would have believed, had not Jesus said, that "murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies," were all enshrined in each of our hearts? (Matt. xv. 19.) That we, until we were converted, were "living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another"? (Titus iii. 3.) Oh, what need is there, then, of following Solomon's advice, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. iv. 23).

The envy of Joseph's brethren had now ripened into cruel settled purposes of malice, they only waited now for an opportunity of gratifying it. Meantime, however, all was calm on the surface. So well did these men dissemble their feelings that neither Jacob nor

Joseph appears to have suspected anything more than usual was the matter. Yea, we may well imagine that now, all being settled, and their minds being fully made up, there would be such an air of frankness and of seeming kindness in the behaviour of his brethren towards the object of their hatred, as he had long been a stranger to. Dear friends, seek that your *hearts* may be changed by omnipotent grace, otherwise were you admitted into heaven, hell itself would appear less intolerable to you than it. Whilst unconverted you cannot love the holy and adorable God, you cannot love his service, you cannot love his people, their conversation, nor their ways. Their blest employments, their holy dispositions, would only arouse your bad passions in a tenfold degree; whilst the consciousness that He who sitteth on the throne, and to whom you once and again servilely attempted to bow the knee, saw all the estrangement of your heart from him, and was aware of all the reluctancy of your compulsory service, would lead you to wish yourself as far away from that blest abode as possible, yea, even in hell itself, provided it did but hide you from his burning gaze. Your *hearts*, dear friends, look at the state of your *hearts*,—for except you are born again, you *cannot* see the kingdom of God (John iii. 3). Except you are so radically changed as to hate all that you now love—sin, self, and pleasure, and to love all that you now hate—God, his ways, and people, heaven would be a hell of hells to you. Either God must change, or you must be changed, or else be damned for ever. Then ask and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. If you ask for the Holy Spirit to *change* your heart, he who never lied

that God who, because he is so little known, is so little loved.

Blithely, then, does Joseph pursue his journey, not thinking only of his father whom he is leaving behind, but also of his brethren to whom he is going. Perhaps, too, he is carrying for their use some little domestic comforts, as David did to his brethren on a later occasion (1 Sam. xvii. 17). As he wends his way onward, he thinks to himself, "Simeon and Levi have forgiven me now, for how kind they were before they left for Shechem. And Judah, too, how affectionately he embraced me. I thought from their looks they never would have loved me again after I had told them my dreams. Ah, those dreams, what strange ones they were! Perhaps it is my brethren themselves who will help me to become so great. O God of my father, how kind art thou to me!" Such thoughts as these, my brethren, we may well imagine were the companions of our youthful friend on his long, long journey. Probably he had never traveled fifty miles by himself before. Now he, too, perhaps, had the same kind of pillow as his father had had before him (Gen. xxviii. 11). He might have regarded that hard pillow as the earnest of many more such, and of much bitterer ones too, but the future is, as I remarked before, happily hid from him. At length, about the fourth or fifth day he arrives at Shechem. It may be about mid-day, and as he approaches the place, his eyes roam about in every direction to find his brethren. But no traces of them can he discover. He wanders about the adjacent fields, for he is confident they named Shechem. At last his earnest, anxious eye attracts notice, an inhabitant of the place accosts him, learns whom he is

seeking, and informs him that his brethren had gone on to Dothan. The wearied youth again cheerfully sets forward, for the consciousness that he shall there certainly find his brethren sustains him. On and on he toils, each step taking him further from his paternal tent. "Surely," he must have thought to himself, "what a long way from home they have gone. What ever led them to remove their flocks so very far!" Ah! he is utterly unaware that his brethren care not to return to their father any more, as long as *he* is with him. Presently, after another journey of ten long miles, he nears Dothan. The thought of seeing them once again, and of subduing the last remains of their envy by so manifest a proof of his love as this, his toiling with his present so far to visit them,—oh, his heart leaps for joy. In the distance he descries them. There they are, sitting grouped together, engaged in earnest conversation, as if they were meditating on the advisability of removing further from their father and their brother. But no fear, or at the most a very remote one, agitates his bosom. Fatigued, he is longing to be with them, rejoice in their affectionate caresses, and partake of all their little kindnesses. Nearer still he draws. They recognise him, but they do not come to meet him. Their conversation assumes a more earnest tone, then it is hushed suddenly into a whisper as he approaches. Soon he is upon them. "My brethren, how fare ye?" is the half breathless enquiry of their fond brother, as, pale and exhausted, dropping his hand into the hand of the nearest one, he essays to embrace him. They, for a moment, are speechless; they are bewildered as they behold his confiding love, and the great proofs of it which he has given. His

haggard appearance leads some of them almost to relent; it requires fresh resolution on their parts to drive away those emotions of pity which are beginning to steal over their breasts. In fact, the hard heart of one, the eldest of them, is melted. That yearning affection towards his absent brethren, as well as that cheerful acquiescence in his father's will which had lent wings to his feet and life to his soul, which had enabled him bravely to face, and boldly to overcome, all the difficulties in his path, may well lead us to admire the wondrous grace of God, which could thus render a poor sinner, such as Joseph was, so illustrious a type in all these points of our own adorable Immanuel.

Oh! my brethren, contemplate the love of our Father in sending his only begotten Son into this wilderness world, and the love of our own precious Christ in leaving the bosom of his Father and the throne of his glory, and taking our nature and being made in all things like unto us (Heb. ii. 17). Why did Christ love us? This is a question which every saint is perpetually putting to his soul, which tunes the harps of the redeemed above, and excites the devotion of their brethren below. It is a question which, the more the believer meditates upon, the more does he adore and wonder. He looks everywhere, but can find no answer,—if he could, he would not be a christian. If he looks into the Sacred Word he observes Jesus gently detaching himself from his most affectionate friends with the solemn memento, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you;" he hears themselves acknowledging, "We love him because he first loved us;" and such statements do but give still more intensity to the question,

Why, then, did he love us? Nor can reason afford any answer, for Christ's love to a pardoned sinner appears altogether unreasonable. Or, shall he look at himself? Shall he look within his breast and try to trace the cause there? Ah, my brethren, we that know ourselves feel that is the most impossible of all. If we deal faithfully with ourselves, we shall find in our hearts deadness, coldness, barrenness, ingratitude, a proneness to wander, to so great a degree, that were it not for the faith which the Lord the Spirit works in the hearts of his elect, we should be determined to disbelieve that God ever could love us. And then, too, when we remember that once we were in open arms against him, that it was thus his love and grace found us, with hearts, as the apostle says, at enmity with him, yea, such pitiable and deplorable objects that we were as a new born infant cast naked into the open field, as the prophet declares (Rom. viii. 7; Ezek. xvi. 4, 5); so truly, I say, shall we find all this to be the case, that instead of gathering hence any reason why we should have been loved by God, we shall only gather abundance of most cogent arguments why we should have been hated. No! looking into our hearts, we shall be able only to say with the afflicted Job, "I abhor myself in dust and ashes." We shall be prone rather to look upwards and say, "Why dost thou bear with me? Why is not even thy patience exhausted when thou beholdest all my perversity? Why am I not a vessel of thy wrath?" And then this amazement, my brethren, may well be infinitely increased, when we reflect that God has not only loved us, but so loved us that he has given us his only begotten Son (John iii. 16); and that Christ has not only loved us,

but given *himself* for us (Gal. ii. 20 ; Eph. v. 25). "Herein is love indeed, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10). How, my brethren, shall I point out to you the stupendousness of this love? What comparison shall I make? It is like — I know not what; there is nothing in all the world like it. If God had emptied heaven of all its glorious inhabitants to save us, it had been a blessed proof of his love to us; but that Christ himself should come, is infinitely beyond it. If God had given us anything or everything except his Son, it had been little in comparison with what he has done, for he has given his Son, his only Son, his Jesus, whom he loves. Yea, more, God esteems Christ so infinitely more precious than all other gifts, that when once he has given us *him*, he can withhold us nothing, but with Christ gives us all things (Rom. viii. 32). It is as if he saw it were of no use to spare anything now, when he had not spared *him*. Many other very great blessings has God given to us besides his Son.

"Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
Our daily thanks employ."

But God appears, in comparison with this one, to disesteem them all, to think them unworthy of being mentioned, and so they are all gathered together, rolled into a heap, and expressed by one word (*παντα*) "all things." These are his words: "He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things." Look at this love; is it not profound? Is it not deep, which lifts us from the very bottom of hell? is it not high, which shall seat us on the throne of our King, as the bride

the Lamb's wife? (Rev. iii. 21.) How mighty is the grasp of that love, to take us from such a depth, and to plant us on such a height! Then, too, look at this love in its length, and in its breadth. My brethren, God is unchangeable. If he loves us now, he must ever have loved us, for his love is incapable of increase or diminution; otherwise, he would be a greater God to-day than he was yesterday. No! he loved us "with an everlasting love" (Jer. xxxi. 3). And then, too, he will love us to everlasting; otherwise, he would be a greater God to-day than he will be presently. No! if when we were enemies we were so infinitely loved, much more, being reconciled through Jesus Christ, shall we ever be loved. It cannot diminish, because it springs not at all from what we were, or shall be, but simply and purely from himself. "By one offering Christ hath perfected for ever" those that were set apart in the eternal counsels of God (Heb. x. 14). "Perfect for ever!" Hallelujah!

Oh, my brethren, is it not almost too much for our poor cold hearts to contain, that God ever did, ever will, and does at this moment, regard us with an affection so tender, and a love so vast, that Christ, and all things with him, were given in consequence? Oh, to realize this love! Oh, for grace to throw away our doubts, our fears, our misgivings, and to receive these truths in our inmost souls, that God loves us with an infinite and an eternal love as much as he loves Jesus Christ (John xvii. 23), and that Christ loves us as much as the Father loves him (John xv. 9). The not realising fully these precious vital truths is the cause of much of that deadness and coldness which, alas, we too often feel. We

are so prone to begin at the wrong end, and to try and work ourselves up into a religious frame, and *then* to think, God loves us *now*, rather than to remember that however we feel, God changes not, that his love does not ebb and flow as does ours, but that he ever loves us as much as ever he can. That, whether we are on the mount of transfiguration, or down in the valley of humiliation, whether we are falling or rising, sorely pressed with temptation or enjoying communion with God, still God is the same, and his love is the same. The former method is mere galvanism, the latter is the Spirit of God's way of melting and sanctifying the soul. Dost thou now, poor tempest-tossed soul, desire to love thy God? Well, then, come with me into those supreme heights of the blessedness of free grace. Thy God and Father loves thee with the same love, with the same equal love, wherewith he loves his own Son Jesus Christ. To spare thee he did not spare him. Are you afraid of believing this? judge now whether it be a vital truth by the effect it has upon thy spirit. Art thou now so down-hearted? You still fear this exceeds the truth? Well, then, if you want Scripture, look at that precious prayer of thine own Jesus in John xvii. 23: "Thou lovest them as thou hast loved me." How could God love us less, seeing that Christ and his church are not twain but one? God does not know you apart from Christ, he only knows you as a member of the body of his Son. As it is true that when we have seen Christ we have seen the Father (John xiv. 9), so it is also true that when the Father looks at Christ he sees us (1 Cor. xii. 12). Further, we appear before him not in our own name but in the name of Christ, *representing Christ*. And,

once more, we come to our Father, like Jacob did to Isaac, in the garments of our elder Brother, arrayed in a righteousness at which angelic purity may well turn pale, in the righteousness of God himself, which "is unto all and upon all them that believe" (Phil. iii. 9; Rom. iii. 22). Now weigh over, poor soul, these six several proofs I have adduced of the position I advanced, and which you will now allow me to repeat; namely, that thy God and Father loves thee with the same love wherewith he loves his own Son Jesus Christ.

Nor, further, is it to be imagined, that Christ *procured* or *purchased* to us this love of our God. There are those who fancy that mercy is extorted, wrestled, wrung out, from the hard, and cruel, and severe breast of our Father. That God would rather be angry if we would let him, but that, by dint of our prayers and of Christ's sacrifice, he is most reluctantly compelled to be merciful. Even good men have unguardedly countenanced such an idea. Thus Dr. Watts sings,—

"Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood,
That calmed his frowning face;
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,
And turned the wrath to grace."

Oh, how much do they wrong our own dear good Father that think thus. The idea is *wholly* unscriptural, yea, it is opposed to Scripture. Each of the persons in the blessed Trinity loves us equally. Because the Father loved us, therefore he sent his Son into the world; because the Son loved us, therefore did he willingly undertake our cause; and because the Spirit loved us, therefore he agreed to convert and sanctify us. In all three, love was the *cause*, not the effect. When Joseph's

brethren had been absent now some time from home, he did not undertake to seek them in order to induce his father to love them, but because the patriarch, anxious for their welfare, gave him this commission: "Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and bring me word again." In like manner was it with our Father: "God *so* loved the world THAT he gave his Son." Here was the love first; and how much love there is wrapped up in that word, "*so*," no tongue can tell; and then because he "*so* loved us" (John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 11), he gave his Son. Hence I take my stand over the Bethlehem cradle and by the Cross of Calvary, for there God would have me learn what feelings he has towards me, and how intense those feelings are. As for God, the love at the bottom of his heart I cannot see; but the only begotten Son, who is in his bosom, he hath "told him out,"* he hath wholly manifested that that heart is all love. So, then, if God had not given Christ at all, he had still been the same God of love, only we should not have known it. Or if Christ, instead of taking our nature and suffering for us, had taken the nature of angels and suffered for those of them who are fallen, as he might have done had he pleased, God had still been love, perfect love. There were two kinds of creatures totally and entirely fallen; he might have saved neither and punished both; he might have saved the angels and damned man (Heb. ii. 16); or he might, as in his free love he chose to do, he might have saved man and damned the angels. In either case God is still *the same* unchanged, unchanging, unchangeable love. Perfect holiness, perfect justice, perfect love, unsullied

* Εξήγησάτο (John i. 18).

purity, had still been the same character of God which-ever he had chosen to do. And out of all these, "Christ loved the church, and" therefore "gave himself for it" (Eph. v. 25). "Glory be to God in the highest!"

That Christ loved his people from everlasting with the same love which he exhibited when he expired on Calvary, is a subject fraught with comfort to every poor depressed believer. It presents the Redeemer to his soul under such a soul-ravishing aspect, as is indeed amply sufficient, when realised, to dispel all fears and doubts from his breast. The Son of God, happy in his Father's love from everlasting, *then*, thought of you and me and all his people, yea, and even then was he our covenant Head. Let imagination pierce the remotest recesses of the eternity that has fled, when as yet no creatures were made, when neither earth, nor heaven, nor stars, nor systems, nor angels, nor cherubim, nor seraphim, had any existence, when no fiat had gone forth from the mouth of the Almighty, when the glory of the eternal Trinity was wholly unmanifested,—that then, and before then, the Father had entered into a covenant with the Son of his love for the glorification of a certain number of individuals, whom with others he would create, and of himself in them (Eph. i. 3—11; Eph. iii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9; Matt. xxv. 34; Rev. xiii. 8; Rev. xvii. 8; 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14; Rom. ix. 23). These he granted to Jesus as his bride and church, and that he should purchase them for ever to himself by his blood (Rev. xxi. 9; Eph. v. 24—32; John x. 15; 1 Peter ii. 9, 10; John xi. 52; Matt. xx. 28; Isaiah liii. 11). These elect vessels, these loved souls, were from everlasting represented by

Jesus. As the high priest in olden times was wont to bear the names of all the tribes of Israel upon his breast-plate when he appeared before God (Ex. xxviii. 29), so our great High Priest bore our names upon his hands and upon his heart (Is. xlix. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 19; John x. 14). Hear this mighty Saviour alluding to these things in the eighth chapter of Proverbs: "The Lord possessed me," says Christ, "in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up (anointed*) from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. . . . Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." Here is this illustrious Being *with* Jehovah and *with* the sons of men. Who can this be but the Mediator, the God-Man Christ Jesus? And here Jesus says that he was anointed and consecrated to his office from everlasting. So that from this and all the Scriptures which I just now quoted, it is plain that Jesus did not then first love his church when she had fallen with the rest of mankind in Adam, but that he had loved her "with an everlasting love" (Jer. xxxi. 3), and, therefore, he betrothed her unto him for ever (Hosea ii. 19). In due time he called all the millions of worlds into existence, and created the angels in their different ranks, "thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers." Presently after, this lower world appeared at his behest, when "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job xxxviii. 7). What made the angels exult so greatly on that occasion? Did they know, had he

* נָחַךְ from נָחַךְ, to pour out, anoint.

told them, that this earth was to be the platform of the contest between himself and his foes? That from this little orb it was his Father's pleasure that all the divine glory should shine out resplendently? That here was to be born all those elect souls who were each dearer to him than the apple of his eye? (Zech. ii. 8.) That this remote corner of his universe was shortly to be* for ever the metropolis of his dominions? Be this as it may, scarcely was man created ere he fell, and then began the manifestation of the love of God; then was first heard the blessed news, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom;"—not "I *will* find," no, the ransom has been found long before; but now the glorious announcement of a Ransomer, of a Redeemer, first fell on mortal ears. Hence Christ is said to have been slain in the purposes of God "from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8). And with all these multiplied testimonies of Holy Writ harmoniously chimes in our own seventeenth Article: "Predestination to life is the *everlasting* purpose of God, whereby *before the foundations of the world were laid* he hath *constantly* decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen *in Christ* out of mankind." Thus you see, then, that our own scriptural church teaches the same thing as I have been inculcating, namely, that Christ was viewed as the federal Head and Representative of his people from everlasting.

* Some persons ignorantly think that this world is to be annihilated. Such I would ask two questions;—First, Did you ever yet hear of the devil conquering God? God has once pronounced this world "very good"—shall Satan bring him to destroy it? And, secondly, on this globe the God of heaven has lived, and walked, and bled, and died. Is it likely that what has been thus consecrated *shall ever cease* to be?

And, my brethren, if you will take the pains to compare together all the several promises of the Messiah which are scattered up and down the Old Testament, you will perceive that each successive one is plainer than the one preceding, until at length the doctrine of a Saviour suffering for the sins of others appears written as legibly in the pages of Isaiah as in the chapters of John. First, he is described as the seed of the woman (Gen. iii. 15); then, as the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations shall be blessed (Gen. xxii. 18); then, as the Shiloh, who shall gather the people together (Gen. xlix. 10); then, as the Prophet like unto Moses (Deut. xviii. 15); and so on. The promise, obscure, I say, at first, becomes more and more definite as time rolls on, until at length the time is mentioned when this "seed" shall come (Dan. ix. 24), that he should be born as a child (Isaiah ix. 6), and born in a supernatural manner (Isaiah vii. 14), that although his birth-place should be Bethlehem Ephratah (Micah v. 2), yet that Galilee should have most of his presence (Isaiah ix. 1, 2), that he should descend from Abraham (Gen. xxii. 18), from Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 4), from Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 14), from the tribe of Judah (Psalm lxxviii. 67, 68), and from the family of David (Isaiah xi. 1; Jer. xxxiii. 5), that he should be a Prophet (Deut. xviii. 15), a Priest (Psalm cx. 4), and a King (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; Zech. ix. 9). That further, although he should be thus perfectly a man, yet that he should be *God* (Isaiah xl. 3; Isaiah ix. 6), Jehovah (Mal. iii. 1), the "fellow" of God (Zech. xiii. 7), the Son of God (Psalm ii. 12; Prov. xxx. 4), "God with us," Immanuel (Isaiah vii. 14). It was also declared that a messenger should precede him (Mal. iii. 1), that

he should be anointed for his wonderful work by the Holy Ghost (Isaiah lxi. 1, 2), that he should be perfectly holy (Isaiah xi. 5), and that he should work many miracles (Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6), that he should be very poor (Isaiah liii. 3), and almost universally hated (Psalm lxxix. 4; Psalm ii. 1—3). And, lastly, that he should suffer and die, “not for himself” (Dan. ix. 26), but vicariously “for us men, and for our salvation,” the Psalms, and Zechariah, and Isaiah (specially in his fifty-third chapter), continually inculcate; as well as that he should be buried (Isaiah liii. 9), raised from the dead (Psalm xvi. 9, 10), and re-ascend into that heaven which for our sakes he had left (Psalm lxxviii. 18). All these and many more things were uttered concerning our glorious Christ: like as in the taking of a portrait, first one touch of the Divine pencil was given, and then another, and then a third, until at last the picture was completed, and Jesus was drawn to the very life. Or, to change the figure, as the time of the dawn of day approached, the light waxed clearer and clearer, and brighter and brighter, until at length the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. iv. 2) appeared first above the horizon at Bethlehem; higher and higher in the firmament did it ascend; “as long as” Christ was “in the world,” he was “the light of the world” (John ix. 5); but the light shone in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not (John i. 5); until at length the natural sun became quite obscured when our Sun had reached his meridian (Matt. xxvii. 45), and there, at the Cross, beamed forth the glory of God with surpassing splendour, when righteousness and peace, wisdom, love, mercy, and justice, “kissed each other” (Psalm lxxxv. 10).

But more than this is true. Long, very long before the Redeemer was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, the sound of his distant footfall could be most distinctly heard. In the time of Samuel, for instance, Jehovah was pleased to reveal himself in Shiloh "by the word of the Lord," that is to say, "through the Lord Jesus" (1 Sam. iii. 21). So, too, it was Jehovah Jesus who was with the Israelitish church in the wilderness. It was not God the Father specially, nor God the Holy Spirit, who fed them with bread from heaven, and with water from the rock, who bore their perversities, and led them to Canaan, but it was JESUS, as Stephen and Paul both testify (Acts vii. 38; 1 Cor. viii. 9, 4). It was Jesus with whom Jacob wrestled near the brook Jabbok, for in one verse he is called a "man," and in another verse he is called God; and who is there that is both God and man, save JESUS? (Gen. xxxii. 24 and 28.) Yea, it was Jesus who delivered Jacob out of all his troubles, as he himself bears witness (Gen. xlviii. 15); for he calls him God, and yet in the sixteenth verse he calls him an angel, that is, messenger of God; but Jesus is the only person who is both these. Again, it was Jehovah Jesus that appeared to Abraham on mount Moriah (Gen. xxii.), for in the sixteenth verse he is called Jehovah, whilst in the fifteenth he is called the angel or messenger of Jehovah; which exactly accords with Malachi's prophecy of Christ, who in one verse (Mal. iii. 1) calls him "the Messenger of the Covenant" and "the Lord," that is, Jehovah. Many more passages might be adduced in which it could be proved that where it is said, "The angel of the Lord appeared," that it is the very Lord of the angels himself, the Lord

Jesus Christ. Let the above, however, suffice. What we desire to point out to you, my brethren, from them all is this: that Jesus was so yearning for the time when he should take up his abode with us, "his delight," as he himself says, was so "with the sons of men" (Prov. viii. 31), that heaven and the heaven of heavens could not contain him, he was fain continually to come down in some special sense or other to see how his brethren fared, to comfort this one with the joy of his countenance, and to deliver that one from some great trouble or other.

At length, however, that period approached which the apostle calls "the fulness of the time" (Gal. iv. 4). The time that God from everlasting had determined on; that prophets and seers had pointed to; when the world had tried every religion save the religion of God, and discovered the utter insufficiency and vanity of them all; when the church had been long enough under the tutelage of the law, and had been brought clearly to see the need of a Lamb of God's providing; then God sent forth his Son made of a woman. Oh, my brethren, that time—the link between two eternities; the moment which had ever been uppermost in the Father's mind; to which everything else that had ever transpired in heaven or earth had, by an infallible decree, been made subservient; for which the world hitherto had, unconsciously to itself, been in a state of preparation; which holy men, and kings, and Simeons innumerable, had desired anxiously to see; when prophet after prophet, and herald after herald, had been for ages proclaiming the near approach of the illustrious stranger, one saying, "Behold thy King cometh!" (Zech. ix. 9), and another, "Behold your God!" (Isa.

xl. 9)—this time, my brethren, this glorious, this solemn, this wonderful time had arrived! Then He, whose home had ever been equally on either side of the stars, who created and sustains the whole universe, by whose fiat cherubim and seraphim sprung into existence, and in whose smile delighted angels bask, at whose terrific frown Satan appalled dropped down into everlasting burnings, who says to a planet, Roll here, and to a sun, Give light there; He, who gathers the winds in his fists, holds the oceans in the hollow of his hand, and taketh up the isles as a very little thing (Prov. xxx. 4; Isa. xl. 15); He, my brethren, emptied himself of all his inconceivable glory, divested himself of all his royal robes, put away from him the worship of all the inhabitants of heaven who are throned, each of them, though adoring; reined in the excessive brightness and majesty of his person,* contracted divinity to a span, entered the virgin's womb, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the "likeness of men." Oh, how great must have been his love, which could lead him to undertake so immense a journey in search of us! From such glory to such abasement, from his Father's bosom to Bethlehem's manger, from the hallelujahs of heaven to the rough usage he met with on earth, from that place where all is purity, and all is holiness, and all is love,

* One great mistake which some make with respect to the transfiguration scene is, that they suppose that the insufferable brightness in which Jesus was then arrayed, and which the evangelists so labour to describe, was owing to a light which shone on him *from above*, instead of, as is the truth, a light which shone *from him and out of him*. The fact is, he would give those favoured disciples some idea of the majesty which was pent up within him, and for this purpose, he withdrew, as it were, his hand a little, in order to let out a ray of his pristine glory. Compare the several accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, for proof of this.

o this benighted and apostate world, a wilderness where few heavenly flowers bloom, to seek and to save his beloved church, who, at least, were as entirely departed from God and holiness as other men are. There, whence he had come, every heart beat with perfect love to him, emulating hierarchs vied with each other who should first perform his scarcely-expressed wish, and whose approving word would unstring their laming tongues and make them dumb with excess of love and joy : here, whither he had come, every heart was by nature inveterately steeled against him, none knew him, none cared for him. When he was born in Bethlehem, the city which belonged to him as the Son of David, no home therein had room for him, no, not the very inn itself, the place designed for the reception of strangers. But although his own knew him not, although his own received him not, his servants recognised him even in his humiliation, even those on whom he has not bestowed any such love as he has exhibited towards us. Their joy seemed to know no bounds. It was midnight. Shepherds in the fields adjacent to the town were keeping watch over their flocks. The stars are shining brightly above their heads, when suddenly they are obscured by one whose countenance is as the lightning, descending rapidly from the spangled vault. In an instant he is upon them. He seems hardly able to contain himself, so extreme is his rapturous joy. He speaks. "Behold," says he, "I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for to you" (not for us, but for you) "is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ Jehovah." When, lo, the heavenly arch is rent in twain, light beyond the brightness of the sun streams forth, and teeming

myriads of angelic spirits descend and stand in serried ranks with their melodious harps around the shepherd; heaven seems once again knit to earth in a far more wondrous manner than Jacob ever saw, for their King, their God has taken flesh. Perhaps these celestial strangers were returning to their native home for attending him in his passage to this world, and he has just received his permission to acquaint these shepherds with the fact. And then their full, their overflowing hearts find vent in that fervent song of praise and exultation,—“Glory, glory, glory; glory be to God in the highest!”

My brethren, if these angelic beings had so much cause to be happy, and to adore and love our God, how much, how very much more have we? Oh, sure as they winged their way back again to heaven they would think to themselves, “Where will these wonders end?” Our God incarnate for his people’s good! love to them, Himself made like them! How much this church he comes to redeem must be loved!

My brethren, I return again to those questions I have already pressed upon you, and would fain press more and more upon myself. Why did he love us? Why did he love us so vastly? Was ever love like this? Is it not infinitely surpassing all creature love? Joseph’s love was great, indeed, when he went so far from his father’s house to seek his brethren; but Jesus’ how much greater! For,—and here I close to-day’s time forbids my enlarging upon it now,—Joseph came not to his brethren aware that he would be sold, but expecting, and rightly expecting, a warm reception; but our Joseph, our Jesus, our own adorable Redeemer came to us, not only expecting the reverse, not or

ecting to be sold, but *he came* IN ORDER THAT *he*
ht be sold, in order that he might be ill-treated, re-
ed, hated, crucified, and that so he might receive us
is arms and clasp us to his bosom for ever. Do, I
y you, meditate upon this single, wide distinction
ween the love of Joseph and that of Jesus which I
e pointed out; and may the Lord, the Holy Spirit,
s such meditation to you, that you may love him
return, give your heart to him, and serve him for
c. Amen.

THE BRETHREN'S TREATMENT.

"And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him."—Acts. vii. 9.

That unkindness cuts us the more keenly, the nearer allied to us those persons are from whom we receive it, is a fact, my brethren, too well known to us all to require proof. The reason of it is plain. When those persons are united to us by blood, or knit to us by friendship, and that friendship is cemented yet closer by time, by accumulated favours, and by our confiding disposition, we are naturally led to expect more and more from our inmost souls, that our love should be reciprocated. But when suddenly, treachery, ingratitude, or ill-will, starts up at our feet, at first we are bewildered, then shocked, and then our feelings are violently bent back and introverted, a sense of isolation and dismay ensues, all the more terrible to bear, the greater the contrast is to that which we had expected. The sacred narrative does not indeed inform us what the state of Joseph's mind was when first the horrible truth was forced upon him, that his brethren's hatred had been all along inveterate though dissembled, which forced dissimulation had served but to rankle and deepen it in their hearts; yet, nevertheless, we may well imagine, *that* when the fact was fully manifest to

him, in all its nakedness and in all its hideousness, he would be the prey, for a time, to the extremest anguish and to sensations not far removed even from despair. There is the exhausted youth at last up with them. A tear of joy glistens in his eye as the thought thrills through him, "Now I'm with them," and then rushing forward, he anxiously enquires, "How fare ye, how fare ye, my brethren?" and then his hand drops into the hand of the nearest, and his head he reclines on his bosom. Poor Joseph! how pale and wan you look. Yes, the journey has been a long one for you, and the you have often been terrified by wild beasts, and perhaps, too, by brutal men. But you care not; you are happy now. Ah, take your head away. That breast has no love for thee. Unnatural passions are rife there. See, those cruel brethren of his are encircling him. Pity again knocks for admission to their heart whilst they look upon their fatigued, lovely, loving brother; but his dreams, his dreams, re-awake the envy, and nerve them for the cruel deed they have determined to commit. At first they had thought of slaying him at once; but Reuben, touched with remorse, had kept them from their purpose, in hopes of devising some expedient by which he might restore him safely to his father. Their plan, therefore, now is, to cast him into some pit, and leave him to perish there with hunger, and thirst, and cold. You know, my brethren, what those pits were for. When a place was infested with lions, or other beasts of prey, the inhabitants were wont to dig deep holes near their supposed haunts, the mouths being covered over with a thin surface of boughs or stubble, in order that they, treading thereon unconscious of danger, might be precipitated to the

bottom (see 2 Sam. xxiii. 20). Many expressions scattered up and down the book of Psalms are in allusion to this ancient practice, as Psalm vii. 15, "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made." It was in one of such pits that his brethren had determined to leave their unoffending victim, gradually to pine away through starvation. Scarcely, then, has he arrived, ere they begin to put their design into execution. That brother, on whose breast he had so affectionately reclined his head, with a surly word and a cruel blow, bids him stand up. Amazed, the poor youth lifts up his eyes, and shudders with terror as he discerns his angry look. He is about to look around to the others for help and explanation, when three or four hands seize hold of his coat,—his coat of many colours,—that eye-sore of theirs, and tear it roughly from his back. Many bitter taunts and biting words now fall upon his ears. Their voices, their faces, assure him it is really his brethren who are thus treating him, otherwise he would fain have persuaded himself it was a dream. Then one, more ferocious than the rest, grasps his arm and leads him towards the pit. In vain does he ask them what they are about to do, in vain does he call them each by their names, addressing himself first to one and then to another, and implore their forgiveness for whatever he has done that has displeased them; their sneers, their cruel hints at his dreams, only let in the truth upon his mind that they are about some premeditated, pre-concerted plan. He grasps their feet, he cries most bitterly, he looks now into the face of one, and then at another, to try if he cannot induce any of them to relent, *when presently they stop short.* Then two of

them each seize a hand, lift him over the pit, and then, although his feet scarcely touch the bottom, they let go their hold. Then do those wretched men quietly retire despite all his prayers, and all his importunities, and all his tears, and sit down complacently to their evening meal, adding thereto, doubtless, some of the little dainties that Joseph had so considerably brought for their comfort. Now whilst they are eating, his cries refresh their souls, when they again call to mind his significant dreams, and their foolish father's manner in which he had assured them that God was often pleased to reveal his will by dreams, yea, that thus he had done with Abraham, with Isaac, and with himself. Now, think they, we shall soon see what will become of his dreams. Envy had rendered them cruel and blood-thirsty, and it now made them unbelieving. Truly, truly, one sin indulged in prepares us for the commission of a thousand more!

Meantime, Joseph redoubles his shrieks and cries, as the inhuman purposes of his brethren reveal themselves more fully to his mind, "What, to be left to starve in that pit! Oh, Simeon, oh, Levi, do forgive me! Oh, my father, my father, shall I never see your face again! Alas, how cruel was your kindness which so unwittingly set my brethren against me!" At length, what with his journey, with hunger, and with weeping, he sinks down exhausted at the bottom of the pit, crying, "O God, God of my father, help me!" Methinks a voice would then whisper in his heart, "Courage, Joseph, there is a 'Brother born for adversity'" (Prov. xvii. 17). Then would he begin to learn that lesson which all the chosen of God must learn, that God in the training up of his children for

the eternal weight of glory which is in store for them, makes constant use of affliction. He intends not that we should reach heaven in an easy chair, but in a chariot of *fire*. There had been hitherto doubtless too much surface-work in Joseph's religion; it was now to be deepened. The words of truth had distilled so gently from his father's lips, that grace had penetrated into his heart ere he was fully aware of it. That parent's love, his pleasant home, and his innocent amusements, still, however, occupied an undue place there. But God treats his children as the eagle does her young (Deut. xxxii. 11). "He stirreth up" our "nest." He is jealous of our love. He has determined that we shall be acquainted with him, and blessed be his name for this his determination. He will force himself into every corner of our heart. He has loved us at a costly rate, and, therefore, he will have nothing less than our inmost souls. "Christ is all and in all" (Col. iii. 11) is a truth not merely inscribed in the pages of his word, but to be written in letters of Calvary's blood by the Spirit of the living God upon the fleshly tablets of our hearts. Oh, my brethren, when sanctified trouble comes, how full, how suitable, how precious, Jesus appears then! We make use of him so much more, we get nearer to him so much oftener, he appears so much more lovely, as may well make us welcome affliction, prefer affliction,—such affliction, I mean, as has such blessed results,—as may indeed constrain us to unite with the Psalmist, "It is *good* for me that I have been afflicted."

But "as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. xxxiii. 25),—thus runs a clause in the heavenly charter. *The Lord* always proportions the trouble

which he sees good to lay upon his children to the strength and grace which he has given them. Look, my brethren, at yonder forest. Observe that the trees on the outskirts are much stronger than those in the interior. How shall we account for this? Those trees have been more exposed to the wind, which has strengthened them and made them strike their roots deeper into the soil. If, however, they had encountered a tempestuous hurricane when they were yet tender saplings, soon would they have been prostrated; but then they were sheltered by others in front, which in process of time have been removed. Now let the storm be ever so boisterous, they only part with a few stray leaves. Hence learn, my brethren, the method of God's procedure with his people. That trouble which you dread so much whilst yet in the distance shall not, no, it shall not crush thee, it shall but drive thee nearer to Christ. Nor shall it come at random, the hand that was pierced for you shall mete it out so as you shall be able to bear it. There will be greater trials for you after this, when he has given you greater grace through that trial now impending. Look at the ten great trials of Abraham; mark how each increased in severity, until the last was, "Take thy son, thy Isaac, and offer him up for a burnt-offering." Why, if such a command had been given to him when first a christian, it had been too much for him. And so with Joseph too; this unkind treatment was almost the first bitter drop he had had to drink; many more such, yea, many bitterer ones yet awaited him. But, however, in them all, as we shall see, "God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions" (Acts vii. 9, 10).

Still, mark, as the mode, so the time of deliverance is generally very different from that which we might be led to expect. Seldom does God deliver us before we have been brought to the verge of despair. The reason is plain. Look at your own mode and you will find something or other carnal in it; look at your own time and you will invariably find it to be the present. But you must learn that as *in Christ* you are princes to prevail with God, so in yourselves you are abject beggars. How many saintly souls are thirsting for the blessing of assurance of salvation. They would give anything to get it, yet they have it not; because the language of their hearts must more intensely be, "*The dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.*" Art *thou* such an one? One word of counsel I have for thee. Thou must be down in the dust, with your eyes intently fixed *alone* on Calvary's Cross; *there* and *then* you shall find assurance, *not before*. It is very kind of the Lord that he defers his deliverance until we have been brought to our wit's end. Ah, infinitely valuable are the lessons which we learn thereby. We learn more of the desperate wickedness of our own deceitful hearts which rendered it so difficult to live by faith in an unseen God, and much more of the superabounding grace of our God, in that, notwithstanding all our unbelief, he would still be gracious to us. Delivered, then we see that he has been watching over us for good all the time, we are ashamed and humbled at the despair which was beginning to steal across our bosoms, and we unwillingly discover that much of our previous confidence was but natural and earthly, merely arising from ways of escape which we could see with *our eyes*, and that the moment the last door of

hope seemed shut, that moment our hearts misgave us. Delivered, we are then overwhelmed at the sense of all the Lord's goodness to us, and of all his free, and full, and unmerited love, and by blessed experience we enter further into the meaning of our Lord's words, "She loved much because she had much forgiven." Yes, beloved, then we are constrained to hide our heads in the dust, whilst as for the Lord, we wish we had ten thousand hearts, that each might be devoted to his praise. The rocks of Pihahiroth, the presence chamber of King Ahasuerus, and many other places, as well as the pit of Joseph, are each and all witnesses to the truth of these remarks.

And as for thee, oh, wicked man, to whom is permitted the horrid privilege of persecuting the righteous, beware! For *your own* sake, let them alone. They have a Friend on high who is mighty, who will avenge their cause. The Lord of Hosts is his name. Touch them, and you touch the apple of his eye (Zech. ii. 8). Know this, that all you are doing against them shall but injure yourself, and shall all be overruled for their welfare. This Haman found, and so shall you. Would you like a more recent specimen? Then here is one taken from Foxe's Acts and Monuments. It is the case of a poor woman, whose name is forgotten *HERE*, who was burnt to death in Chipping, Sudbury, in the reign of King Henry the Seventh. Her crime in the eyes of her enemies was Lollardism, that is, Protestantism, and her judge was a Doctor Whittington, the chancellor of the bishop in whose diocese she lived. The historian himself shall tell the rest of the story. "After this godly woman and manly martyr of Christ was condemned by the wretched chancellor above-

named, Dr. Whittington, for the faithful profession of the truth, which the Papists then called heresy, and the time being now come when she should be brought to the place and pains of her martyrdom, a great concourse of all the multitude both in the town and country about was gathered to behold her end; among whom was also the aforesaid Dr. Whittington, the chancellor, there present to see the execution done. Thus this faithful woman and true servant of God, constantly persisting in the testimony of the truth, committing her cause to the Lord, gave over her life to the fire, refusing no pains nor torments to keep her conscience clear and unreprouable in the day of the Lord. The sacrifice being ended, the people began to return homeward, coming from the burning of this blessed martyr. It came to pass in the meantime, that as the Catholic executioners were busy in slaying this silly lamb at the town's end, a certain butcher was as busy within the town, slaying a bull; which bull he held fast bound in ropes, ready to knock him on the head. But the butcher (beliking not so skilful in his art of killing beasts as the Papists be in murdering christians) as he was lifting his axe to strike the bull, failed in his stroke and smote a little too low, or else how he smote, I know not; this is certain, that the bull, although somewhat grieved at the stroke, but yet not stricken down, put his strength to the ropes, and brake loose from the butcher into the street, the very same time that the people were coming in great press from the burning, who seeing the bull coming towards them, and supposing him to be wild (as it was no other like), gave way for the beast, every man shifting for himself as well as he might. Thus the people giving

back, and making a lane for the bull, he passed through the throng of them, touching neither man nor child till he came where the chancellor was, against whom the bull, as pricked with sudden vehemency, ran full butt with his horns, and taking him upon the haunch, gored him through and through, and so killed him immediately, carrying his entrails, and trailing them with his horns, all the street over, to the great admiration and wonder of all them that saw it." Persecuting the people of God is no light thing then. None ever found it to be so. Whether God afterwards in his sovereign love gave the persecutor repentance unto life, and made the stones that fell on Stephen's head to break Paul's heart;* whether he let the wretch live afterwards many years with a hardened and impenitent heart, as an Ahab; or whether he immediately avenged his own elect, as he did in the time of Haman, Pharaoh, and of the poor wretch Whittington mentioned above; still

* Saul was an unconverted man until Christ stopped him in his headlong career, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." That such a man should be thus turned from a lion, or rather wild boar, into a lamb, is as eminent an example as can be found in all the Bible that it is not by the force of free-will, but by the power of free and invincible grace, that a sinner is brought from darkness to light, and from the dominion of Satan to that of God. Yet I think there are traces to be found in proof that the prayer and murder of Stephen, in which Saul not only assisted, but had the chief hand (as Augustine says, "keeping the clothes of all, that he might have a hand in the stone-throw of all"), that these pricked his conscience and rendered him an unhappy man. Thus when Luke says that the face of Stephen at the council resembled that of "an angel" (Acts vi. 15), it is very probable that he got the information from Paul his fellow-traveler, who was present on the occasion. And if this be the case, then we have the effect of Stephen's appearance and speech upon the mind of Paul. Further than this, there are expressions in St. Paul's writings bearing a marked relation to words used in the speech of Stephen, as if they had been imprinted on his memory (thus, compare Acts vii. 48, with Acts xvii. 24; compare Acts vii. 53, with Gal. iii. 19). Each refers to the same passage (compare Acts vii. 44, with Heb. viii. 5). Each breathes the same prayer (compare Acts vii. 60, with 2 Tim. iv. 16).

all I believe have been made to feel, that although God for their good is pleased oftentimes to afflict his own people, he will let none others do it with impunity. This the brethren of Joseph discovered; **their unnatural cruelty preyed upon their conscience long afterwards**, leading them, not once, doubtless, but frequently, to ejaculate, "Did we not see the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear? therefore is this distress come upon us" (Gen. xlii. 21); this, I say, they discovered, and so shall you.

Joseph's tears are hushed; deliverance appears. That infidel chuckle of his brethren, "We shall see what will become of his dreams," gives place to love of money. A caravan of Ishmaelitish merchants, bearing the productions of Gilead to barter in Egypt are seen approaching. What led those men to that spot at that peculiar and critical juncture, and what induced these cruel brethren so instantaneously to change their purpose, can never be truthfully answered by any one who disbelieves in the eternal predestination of God, "whereby," to use the words of Archbishop Usher, "he governs even the transgressor against his holy will." However, their purpose is changed, and again God did wisely what they did wickedly. The thought occurs to Judah, "What profit is there, if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come," says he, "and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh." Thus does this sleek monster disguise under oily words his wretched love of money. "And his brethren were content," pithily says the narrative. Oh, hypocrisy, who enablest thy proteges to commit any and every *sin, and art ever ready with subterfuges and masks for*

them; by whose magic, hellish wand detestable vices are made to appear to others, and to their owners, too, as if they were golden virtues; offspring of Satan! parent of Judas! how dismal shall be thy look when the divine brightness of the judgment-morn pierces in and through thee, strips thee naked, and exposes all thy wretched sophistry! My brethren, many have ever been the votaries of hypocrisy. When the Redeemer trod the earth, the Pharisees, those sanctified scoundrels, could not endure his searching gaze, who whilst he had gentle words for every contrite sinner that approached him, ever and anon to them broke forth in words of thunder, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" (Matt. xxiii. 13—29). And I am persuaded that when he comes again the world shall be full of professors of religion, like it is now, of those who, to use the language of St. Paul, shall be "without natural affection, despisers of those that are good, traitors, lovers of pleasure," and who yet *cover all up under the "form of godliness"* (2 Tim. iii. 1—5).

The bargain is soon concluded, and Joseph is now a slave. It was their own brother whom these men sold, the son of Israel's old age, their only parent's darling; it was to perfect strangers that they sold him, to persons who cared not, except for their own selfish ends, whether he died or lived. They sold him under the full expectation of never seeing him again, with the prospect clearly in view, that chains, and servitude, and mental and bodily torture, awaited him, and that nothing but death would terminate his woes. The price they received was twenty pieces of silver, that is to say, two pieces for each individual. For that sum of money these men could steel their hearts to tantalise their brother with

a hope of deliverance, to lift him from the pit, to sneer at his transient joy, to consign him into the hands of the merchants. Unmoved, they can behold his haggard expression and grief-worn countenance, complacently can see the innocent youth bound and led away by dealers in human living flesh and blood, can calmly see joy succeeded by astonishment, astonishment by terror, and terror by anguish, in their brother's face. Yes, I say, they can look on this scene icily, triumphantly, derisively; they can see the caravan move on, they can hear his moans waxing fainter and fainter as it proceeds. Now it appears as a dark speck in the distance, and now it has disappeared altogether. Now they have leisure to finish their evening meal, to deliberate what they shall do with their money, and how they shall deceive their father. You are aware of the device which they determine to practise on their aged parent. The many-coloured coat dipped in goat's blood is exhibited to him; he recognises it as his son's coat, concludes he has been torn in pieces by wild beasts, and so abandons himself to poignant grief. As for Joseph, he is taken to Egypt, and is there purchased by Potiphar, a grandee of that country. Surely, my brethren, surely Adam's fall must have been total, and must have involved us all, like begetting like, unclean proceeding from the unclean (Job. xiv. 4, and xxv. 4), ere such consummate wickedness could have been perpetrated by his descendants. Nor blame them only, my christian friends, as though their crimes had placed them beyond the pale of humanity. Such heinous guilt is far from uncommon, and you yourselves have committed a sin infinitely more aggravated, and of a far deeper dye, even than that

of theirs. You start! You shake your head incredulously! Listen!

Is not Jesus infinitely worthier of our love than Joseph ever was or could be of his brethren's! Worthier, as I have in the preceding discourses shewn to you, both on account of the inconceivable dignity of his Person, as the only begotten Son of God, and of the freeness and fulness of his love to us, a love that led him to unite himself to us in the indissoluble bonds of an everlasting covenant as our Husband and Brother, that brought him from the highest throne of glory to take our nature, guilt, shame, woes, and sufferings, that we might be with him for ever;—worthier indeed he is. Yet, what treatment did he experience from us? I speak not of the harlot world,—their behaviour towards him will be considered in the succeeding lecture; but I ask, how did *we* demean ourselves towards him, we whom he so loved, we whom he came to save? The apostle gives us the answer in few, but pregnant words: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John i. 11). We hated him, we rejected him, we crucified him. And our opposition would have continued until this day, yea, and for ever, unless the Spirit of God had touched our hearts, affected them with a sense of his exceeding love, and made us cry out, "Alas, alas, *I* have crucified my Saviour. *I* have imbrued my hands in innocent blood, in the sacred blood of him that loved me. *I* crowned him with thorns. *I* drove the nails into those dear hands and feet. *I* pierced his side. *I* slew him." Do you hesitate to say this, my brethren? Then, if so, your hearts are still at enmity with him, you are yet in the bond of iniquity. For you have yet to learn

those lessons which the Spirit of God alone can teach you : first, that neither Caiaphas, nor Pilate, nor Herod, could have had any power against him, unless we had been sinners,—that it was our sins laid upon him that made him suffer : and, secondly, that if you had been alive when Jesus was upon the earth, and had had the opportunity, you yourselves, unless the Spirit of God had preserved you, you yourselves would have rejected him, denied him, crucified him. Those that did reject him acted as your representatives, were animated with the same spirit that, until the Spirit of God converted your hearts, animated you ; so that if you and they could have mutually changed the respective times of your living in this world, you living in their times and they in yours, you would have turned your backs upon Jesus so as they did ; and then those we must equally have laboured to convince that they were as vile as you, as now we have to labour to convince you that you are as vile as they. It was the realisation of this truth, my dear brethren, that caused the evangelical prophet to give utterance to those mournful expressions concerning the treatment which his Saviour should experience—expressions, in which he blames not the Jews of Christ's time merely, exculpating himself, but he speaks in the first person, accusing himself as well as them. These are his words : "He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; and *we* hid as it were *our* faces from him ; he was despised ; he was despised, and *we* esteemed him not " (Isaiah liii. 3).

Oh, it is indeed affecting and deeply humiliating as respects ourselves, and truly heart-rending as respects our *adorable Redeemer*, to read the accounts as they

are delivered in the gospels of the reception which he met with from his brethren, those whom he came to save; and then, at each successive incident in the narratives, to place ourselves amongst them, and whisper to our souls, "Thus, and thus, and thus, did you behave, O my soul." Now by the term, "brethren of Christ," you are not to understand only or chiefly the eleven apostles and the seventy disciples, but also "all those that were to believe on him through their word," for all these were his brethren, truly though not manifestly to the world, by virtue of that "everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure." All these were truly his brethren; all these he had come to save, and did save too, as well as those who acknowledged him whilst he was on earth. His eye was on them all, he loved them all, he knew them all, though they knew not him. He thought of you and me, my brethren; our names were "engraven upon the palms of his hands," yea, upon the bottom of his heart. Sometimes he would talk about *us* more particularly, as when he said those sweet words, "I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, not of this (Jewish) fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John x. 15, 16). Hence we find him after his ascension encouraging Paul when he came to wicked Corinth with these words, "Be not afraid, but speak, . . . for I have much people in this city" (Acts xviii. 9, 10). He loved us all then, and thought of us all, as well the last elect soul that shall be born ere he comes again as Peter himself, for he is such a God is our God as that he "calleth things that be not as though they were" (Rom. iv. 17). But oh, how infatuated, my brethren,

were we, and those of our brethren who lived in the time of Christ, as that we could so cruelly turn our backs upon him who loved us so freely, and that we could hate him without a cause. In our last discourse we reminded you that as soon as he was born, he was houseless, the critical situation of his mother not moving any one in pity to make room for her.* Not a single human being could find room for Christ, and so a cattle-shed witnessed the birth of the King of Glory. O Saviour, why should I repine at aught thy love appoints me here, when thou thyself didst voluntarily assume such abject poverty? Yes, thou dost design it to thy saints as a special favour, when thou dost determine their lot to be TO FOLLOW THEE through ignominy, suffering, and want! What scorn thou didst pour on all that the world calls great! The world's conceptions of grandeur are purple robes, and golden chains, and servile outward homage. Their tinseled glory vanishes the moment such things are withdrawn. Such trifles cannot add to thy glory, nothing can; thou art glorified the more thou art *known*. But from Bethlehem's manger I see more of thy real greatness, majesty, grace, and love, than even I can from thy heavenly throne. The glory shining from that manger, though more subdued, infinitely transcends any that angelic eye ever saw, for there can be seen more of Thee. O wonder of wonders, Mary

* May not this be adduced as one of the proofs of the authenticity of the sacred narrative, that "there was no room for them in the inn"? What forger would have thought of mentioning this unless it had really occurred? And yet how probable that such a circumstance would occur. Mary had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. In her state, such a journey must be performed by easy stages. Hence most of those who had to go to Bethlehem would arrive before Joseph and her, and consequently the inn would be full.

holds her God and Saviour upon her breast! giving food to him, and he is giving life to her *is there* folded in her arms, and he *is there* lying bosom of his eternal Father! (John i. 18, and i. 19) He *is there* asleep in her lap, and he *is there* at the same time sustaining myriads of systems of worlds, and giving life, and breath, and all to all creation!

Of the life of Christ previous to his solemn vocation to his mediatorial work and office of baptism, Scripture is almost entirely silent, forming thereby a remarkable contrast between the infancy and the apocryphal gospels. We may, however, observe that Joseph died long before his reputed Son, after the baptism of Christ he is not once mentioned. When, upon one occasion, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him (Mark 3: 32-35), no mention is made of Joseph. And, at the crucifixion, when his mother, and his aunt, and the beloved disciple, were present, still there was no allusion to the presence of Joseph. If he had been alive, would Jesus have committed his mother to the care of John; thereby, even in those solemn moments, giving proof of his obedience to the fifth commandment?

These observations, my brethren, will partly prepare our minds for the startling Scriptural assertion that Jesus, from the first moment of his ministerial life, was a houseless wanderer. This was not the case occasionally but ordinarily. Hence, when he repelled those who would have followed him from unworthy motives, he gave vent to that affecting exclamation, "The earth hath no room, and the birds of the air have nests, but

Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. viii. 20). As if he had said, "Think not that following me is the path to honour and to plenty, quite the reverse; so poor am I, so uncared for by all men, that whilst all others have a home, not excepting even the very beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, he under whom you would enlist has none." In accordance with these words we read that, upon another occasion, he spent the night (*εν τη προσευχη του θεου*) "in the prayer-house of God" (Luke vi. 12). Prayer-houses were built all over Palestine, for the use of pious Jews to retire to when they pleased, for the purposes of meditation and prayer. They merely consisted of four bare walls, with no other roof than the canopy of heaven. In such places as these it appears Jesus was wont to pass his nights. But the most affecting incident of this sort of which we read, is that one recorded in John vii. 53, with viii. 1, 2. It is a great pity the chapter there has been divided so badly, as the very pith of the story is thereby half concealed. Jesus had been teaching in the temple. The people, charmed, had exclaimed, many of them, "This is the prophet;" others, yet more bold, "This is the Christ." The officers of the Pharisees sent to apprehend him, awed by his looks, and riveted by his words, forgot the object of their mission, and returned without him. The Sanhedrim and others, more enraged thereat than ever, and scandalised at the fact of Jesus having been brought up in Galilee, pertinaciously maintained him to be a deceiver. Meanwhile evening approaches, and for a time ends the quarrel. Those who admire his teaching, and those who hate it, each and all go to their "own house." But whither goes the Teacher

himself? As he has no home to shelter him, and all are acquainted with his poverty, how many invitations does he receive? Not one. The story proceeds, "Jesus went to the mount of Olives" (John viii. 1), probably to some prayer-house or other built near its summit. And there this indefatigable Saviour, ever bent on doing good, "early in the morning," and hungry, as we may well imagine, returns again to the temple, and there do his restless enemies recommence their plans to ensnare him. So that we may now gather how each party had been employed during the silent hours of night. They, in concocting fresh schemes for his ruin; he, in pleading for them, "not for the world, but for those given to him" (John xvii. 9,) at the throne of his Father. Adorable Redeemer, how abounding is thy love!

Oftentimes were the people ravished with the words of Christ. At one time, it is said, "many believed on him" (John viii. 31). On another occasion, they would fain have made him king (John vi. 15), at least for a few days, until they had altered their minds. At another time, he was preaching in the synagogue of Nazareth, "and," says the evangelist, "all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke iv. 22). But their hearts were, meanwhile, unaffected and un-renewed. Hence their fickle souls were soon offended, when they heard of truths which were unpalatable. Look to the issue of that same discourse of his, the beginning of which had so pleased the Nazarenes. He had been saying that he was "sent to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Thus far they are

pleased. Then he reminds them that his mercy is electing, sovereign, and free. And then we read that "when they heard these things they were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong" (Luke iv. 16—29). And much in the same way terminated those other cases of the Jews' admiration of Jesus which we have cited above.

It is a solemn proof, dear friends, of the wretchedness and helplessness of our condition by nature, that as it was necessary that Christ himself should suffer, ere we could be pardoned, of so dark a hue were our sins; so it is necessary that the Lord, the Holy Spirit himself, should take us in hand, ere we can think one good thought, or advance one step towards the Saviour of our souls. It is as difficult for the arrow of the divine word to reach the hearts of the careless, as those of its avowed opponents. Love of sin is naturally in every heart, and is the real cause of the volatility and frivolity of the one, as of the determined rage of the other. I firmly believe, however, that in many cases the latter are nearer the kingdom of God than the former. Who knows but that in the secret breast of that man that appears so decided a foe to the truth of God, there may be truth rankling and rousing up the natural godlessness of his nature, which before was more like a snake in winter? Whilst, on the other hand, with those who hear and approve of many things we say, yet would not mind if we had said exactly the reverse, oh, their hearts are callous, stoical, infidel! Attachment to the world and to sin, seals almost *impenetrably* their hearts. The heavy

laden clouds of our sermons may thunder and lighten over the heads of our people without any effect, until the Spirit direct them. This the prophet Ezekiel found, as the Lord testifies: "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not" (Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32). When once, however, the word begins to take effect, and to touch men's consciences, its first appearance is oftentimes in the way of opposition. As for the people in our Saviour's time, they were willing to be healed, and to be fed with manna; but then he struck home to their hearts when he testified, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles (and felt convinced thereby that I am the Son of God), but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled" (John vi. 26). And then he dealt them some plain and homely truths, which effected that, from wishing to crown him (verse 15), they "murmured at him, and said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" (verses 41 and 42); and "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (verse 66). See, my brethren, the consequence of declaring the whole counsel of God. It shook off their easy carelessness, and led them to be more decided; hostile truly, but still *one* step was gained, the surface was broken, truth did not so quickly glide off afterwards as before. And who can tell what befell these men, many of them, after the day of Pentecost?

But what was the doctrine that had so offended them? We have seen in the former case (Luke iv. 25—27) it was that of election. And if we well weigh over Christ's expressions in this chapter (John vi.), we shall find that it was, in this case, the sublime truth, that the eternal and only begotten Son of God had united himself to us, and that there was a necessity that we should be united to him. This might well alarm their consciences, that they were so near hell and irretrievable ruin, and their condition so hopeless, that the only Son of the only God alone could save them. What! that he who stood before them had been in heaven from everlasting and had left it for their salvation! Why, then, he was entitled to their whole hearts, to their supreme affections. Why, then, they would have to follow him *fully*, unreservedly,—Him so meek, so humble, so lowly, so self-denying, so holy, so heavenly, so pure, as their very inmost souls bore witness to:—impossible! The light shone in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not (John i. 5). Truly light had come into the world, but “men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light” (John iii. 19, 20). He the Son of God! Then the love of the world must be renounced, and they must be brought to glory, not in the hope of one who would deliver them from the Roman yoke and make them first among the nations, but in the Cross of Christ,—a Cross to be erected on account of *their own* obliquity, to which they were even now in bondage, and from which only could they be delivered by that Cross pardoning, and that Cross subduing, their sins. They, they were the children of Abraham, as others of

kindred spirit remarked to him upon another occasion, and were never in bondage to any man (John viii. 33). Hear Christ's reply: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. . . . If *the Son* shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John viii. 34—36). Were not such words as these calculated to cut them to the quick? Might they not well ask, as they presently did, "Whom makest thou thyself?" (John viii. 53.) And when he then gave them some hint as to his greatness (John viii. 58), and spoke plainly out a few days subsequently (John x. 30), might not we, who know something of the human heart's love of sin, might not we, I say, expect that their alarmed and terrified consciences would rebel against such declarations, and lead them to treat him in some such way as in either instance they endeavoured to do? (John viii. 59, and x. 31—39.)

If Jesus be the Son of God, my brethren, and our Saviour, it is perfectly clear that he is entitled to, and must reign over our hearts, our souls, our consciences, our affections, our thoughts, and words, and ways; our submission to him must be ultimately perfect and entire. Of course, in our natural state, this we must reject, like as the Jews of Christ's time, who are our brethren, did. It was likely, therefore, that Jesus, the more he propounded his heavenly doctrine, and the more the Jews understood of the submission which he claimed to be his due, would the more be hated. This we find was the case. Enemies of his abounded on all sides. Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, however bitterly they might hate each other, yet all concurred in this, to lay snares for his ruin (Matt. xxii. 15—23). The whole of Judea became too hot

o hold him (John vii. 1). Presently he had to quit Palestine altogether, and cross the Jordan (John x. 40). His very brethren after the flesh, the children of Mary his mother, ridiculed his pretensions (John vii. 5). Yea, among his own familiar friends, there was a concealed foe. Ultimately it came to be an understood thing among them all, that he must be put to death, in order that thereby all his claims, and all his assertions, and all his words, might be proved empty and unmeaning. Thought they to themselves, "Let us kill him, and then we shall soon see what will become of his words." They agreed, however, that his apprehension should be deferred until after the Passover, which was then approaching, was past, lest the fickle, careless multitude should make a disturbance in his favour. But such was not the will of God. It was his will that the Paschal Lamb of his providing should be slain on the fourteenth of Nisan, "in the evening," or, as it is in the original, "between the two evenings," * that is to say, between twelve o'clock and twilight (Exod. xii. 6). This accordingly came to pass. Contrary to their most sanguine expectations, a traitor presented himself to the chief priests and agreed to deliver him into their hands for a certain price. With avidity they close with his proposal. The sum agreed upon was £4. 10s., the ordinary price of an inferior slave. That is the sum at which they value their King, their Brother, and their God. I say,

* בין הערבים. The Jews divided the day into morning and evening; till the sun passed the meridian all was morning, after that, all was evening. Their first evening began just after twelve o'clock, and lasted till sunset; their second evening began at sunset and continued till night, that is during all the time of twilight. Christ was slain on the very identical day, and the very identical hour, that God had ordered the Lamb should be! Wonderful!

"their God," because many of them were his elect, as we shall afterwards see, though at present unconverted. The whole love of Deity has been concentrated on these brethren of Christ, and the value which they put upon it is £4. 10s. That price was paid, so that he might be slain; and as they themselves had not the authority to put any one to death, it was paid so that he might be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles. They paid that price in the hope that the most barbarous indignities, and cruel tortures, and ignominious death, might be his lot. And thus they were much more ferocious than Joseph's brethren had ever been. And who was it that they, and you, and I, my brethren, valued at so contemptible a price? It was Jesus. It was *Jesus*. It was your Brother, your Friend, your Saviour, your Husband, your God. You put him on a level with a slave. Although infinite, eternal, incarnate, pure love, yet you could see no form nor comeliness in him. Muse, my brethren, on what the Scriptures say of Jesus, and then think how you have esteemed, or rather despised him. You have preferred the world to Jesus. You have preferred the service of your lusts to Jesus. That lust, now, of which your conscience accuses you, alas, you have loved it better than Jesus! How keenly must Jesus feel all this treatment, both of those priests, and of you, and me, sinners—the infinitely keener, the infinitely holier he is than you. Harken to his piercing, soul-cutting exclamation: "A goodly price that I was prised at of them" (Zech. xi. 13).

In accordance with the arrangement, Jesus is delivered into the hands of an armed band belonging to the priests and Pharisees, at dead of night. His timid

riends indeed make a momentary shew of trifling resistance to his capture, but it is indeed trifling. He himself bids them desist, and adds, that if he chose, in a moment he could be surrounded, not by a few trembling, terrified men, but by as many armies of mighty angels. But he does not choose. His sufferings, utterly unlike Joseph's, were all voluntary; he submitted to all in love to his foes, his captors, his blood-hirsty opponents, and, as bad as any, yea, surely worse than all, you and me. For they never sinned against much light as you and I have, my brethren. Yet, indeed, he gave them one solemn warning of what they were about to do. His first word to them, and calm look, and sublime deportment, so awed them, that they went backward and fell to the ground. Lanterns, torches, and weapons; officers, men, and Judas, were all rolling in the dust before the mighty "I AM." Had he chosen, the earth would have opened and swallowed them up, and they had gone down alive into the pit,—it was as easy for him to do the one as the other; but then, as he said himself, "How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matt. xxvi. 54.) Therefore he delivers himself into their hands. And they bind him; those fearful hands and arms, which had never been uplifted out to do good, are bound with chains. Then is he led away—led like a lamb to the slaughter-house. As for his disciples, they all forsake him and flee. There are those who suppose that Jesus, on his way over the brook Kedron, was pushed into it by the soldiers. The passage they quote in proof is Psalm x. 7. It is true no evangelist makes mention of such a thing; but then they themselves say that they

only narrate a few things as specimens of the *Now*, it is certain he was conducted, sometime in interval between the different examinations, to prepare for the prophet emphatically says so (Isaiah li Yet no evangelist records this. The word translated "brook" (בֹּחַל) may, indeed, denote his affliction generally; but still the literal idea is by no means incompatible with the rest of his humiliation. That, however, as it may, Jesus is conducted, at a preliminary examination before Annas, to the Sanhedrim, the supreme council of the Jewish nation. This council was instituted in the time of the Maccabees.* Its constitution was as follows. The high priest for the time being was president. All who had held that office, together with the heads of the twenty-four courses of priests, and the eminent of the scribes, had seats therein. The number of its members altogether was seventy-two. It was before this grand tribunal that Jesus was now brought. Here his claims were to be officially pronounced or officially rejected.

At length the day begins to dawn, and "the multitude of the people and the chief priests come together. Long had they desired to have him in their hands, but at last they have him. The news spread like fire through the whole city, that their arch-enemy had been captured, and thrown into chains during the night. They are not long ere they assemble; and all anxious to feast his eyes with a sight of him who

* The Jews say that this council was instituted by Moses when he gathered the seventy elders of Israel (Num. xi. 17); but its Grecian name, *συνεδριον*, points to a much later date. Others say that Ezra was its originator. We prefer the time we have given above.

ow shall be their victim. They meet in the high priest's house. And now he is led from the prison to the judgment. The wolves and the lamb meet together. They have resolved on a quiet judicial order. And so they seek "false witness against him put him to death." His death—that is what they want, nor are they anxious to keep their wishes secret. Now, bitter, how inimical they are to Jesus. Surely on other occasions they would not thus have acted—Scribes, high priests, and Pharisees, seeking false witness; but now their passions reign supreme. Blinded by zeal, his death they want, his death they will have, what method they care not. "Let us do evil," say they, "that good may come." Does their heart appear sick? My brother, my sister, such was thine once. The false witnesses are sought, but not found. How is this? Jezebel could easily find them when she wanted to destroy Naboth! Pure, unmingled falsehood would not have served their turn; what they wanted was the perversion and inversion of some truth. Any charge required two witnesses (Deut. xvii. 6), and the evidence of these two must match, dovetail* together. Ultimately, however, two such witnesses present themselves. These charge him with having said, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." Now, how were these *false* witnesses? Had not Jesus said these words? (John ii. 9.) No; there was an important variation between Christ's words and the evidence of these men. Christ had said, "If *you* destroy, *I* will rebuild." They asserted that he said, "I will destroy."† He had presented himself the

* *ισοι* (Mark xiv. 56).

† *εγω καταλυσω* (Mark xiv. 58).

restorer,—they represented him as the deceiver. Still, however, these men, bad as they were, dare not dare to convict him. Is he to be allowed to go free now, now that he is in their hands? *Now* after so many months of anxious desire for his restoration. No, by no means. Still, what are they to do? At length a thought strikes the high priest, and he acts upon it. He will make the accused confess himself. They know that he claims to be the Son of God. He will get him to own that if he can, and he may be convicted of blasphemy. Now look at the providence of God in this. No evidence can be adduced against the divine Saviour. Not a dog can move his tongue. Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and irreproachable, his veriest enemies can find nothing against him. He shall be condemned for declaring himself to be, what he most truly is, the Son of God. If Joseph had not had his dream of future greatness, he had never been sold; if Jesus had not been clothed with Divine attributes, he had never been crucified. He is to be condemned simply for being the Redeemer, and a divine one. He stands,—meek, patient, resigned. They say things against him,—they cruelly pervert his words. They lay to his charge things that he knows not of,—but still he answers not. He knows that they are thirsting for his blood, and that they will not be satisfied until they have it. And, therefore, he answers not. When now the high priest, the ecclesiastical head of the Jewish nation, puts to him a question, at once shewing the real cause of the nation's hatred, and accounting for his mysterious and disobedient behaviour. "Art thou," says the sham high pr

the real one, "Art thou, or art thou not, the Son of that eternal Being whom we all adore and bless?" Here is the crisis. All eyes are now fixed on him. It is a solemn moment. If he renounce his claim, they are his friends, and the matter is ended. But, look, he starts! A moment before, and he appeared a pitiable object. Haggard and enfeebled, with watching, and sorrow, and agony, his appearance seemed to say, Is it against me, a worm and no man, yea, the very outcast of men, that you are thus leagued together? Find some object more worthy of your hatred! But, he starts! the question reminds him of all that honour and glory which he had from everlasting been wont to receive, but of which, for their and our sakes, he had emptied himself. His poor frame seems hardly able to contain the Godhead that is within. Divinity shines in every lineament of his countenance. His face is lighted up with that majestic and godlike look that enchains and paralyses his enemies into the most perfect silence. He speaks: "You ask me whether I am the Son of God — I AM. . . . Yea, more, the time approaches when, no longer standing at your bar shall I be a butt on which to heap your withering looks of scorn and hatred, but when the eyes of ye and all creation shall be fixed upon me, the then acknowledged divine and human Saviour; and ye shall count it your supremest glory and delight if I bestow a gracious look upon you, and acknowledge your names before my Father and my angels." 'Twas but for a moment. He is silent. His animation seems wholly to have left him. His foes, however, almost choking with rage, instantly condemn *him to be guilty of death.* They had

thought, perhaps, he would have admitted it, but in a far more timid and qualified manner. Not so he. When they have silenced their consciences, and recovered from their consternation, the high priest, bracing up his courage, improves the moment, and, rending his clothes, with consummate hypocrisy and skilful tact, looks round upon them all and says, "What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?" And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. There was the voice of Israel,—the type of the elect of God. There was the solemn, deliberate rejection of the Messiah who had come to save them. He had come as a Brother to his own, and "his own received him not."

The moment the terrible verdict is pronounced, the vile underlings seize him; they know they shall never please their masters better than by now insulting him. One buffets him, another spits in his face, another ridicules his claims as a prophet. And, that naught shall be omitted which can add to the acuteness of his sufferings, even whilst his trial is proceeding before those white-washed sepulchres, something still more poignant is being enacted among the soldiers without. There his most intimate friend, throwing curses and oaths in his face, thrice denies that he knows him at all. Everything is to conspire, by the eternal predestination of God, to render the cup which Jesus has to drink and to drain, as bitter as possible. Nothing is wanting, O Saviour, that shall tend to cut thee to the quick! Ah, what a look thou gavest Peter,—a look not of reproach, far from that,—a look of the tenderest pity and of the sincerest love; a look that well might

did quickly did, break poor Peter's heart (Luke xxii.). Yet blame not him, beloved friends, blame yourselves. Oftentimes have you behaved as cruelly to us as ever Peter did. Oftentimes has your cheek flushed at the mention of his name; oftentimes have you neglected to defend his cause when conscience told you it was your duty to do so.

Neither throw a stone at those sacerdotal savages, nor you now behold issuing from the high priest's hall, and with Jesus their prisoner proceeding to the procurator's palace. There are those holy butchers leading a lamb to the slaughter. See how they treat him on his way. Mark the chuckling, the satisfied, derisive glances they cast at Jesus. Listen to their evil words. Common humanity would treat them to have kindly to a fallen foe,—and have they lost it?—but it is *Jesus* who is their prisoner. Harmless prisoner! how do they behave to thee. No mental dignity is wanting. Curses, reproaches, taunts, insults, and mockery, are liberally heaped upon thee. Thou art as a Lamb! Thou answerest not. Thou only bearest all. Thy holy soul is not once moved, with pity and affection to many in the crowd insulting thee. There are those infatuated, maddened, now goaded to the extremest pitch of fury by this sublime confession of thine, O my Saviour, still ringing in their hearts. Yes, there they are, actually rendering up their real and rightful King into the hands of the Romans, their true Redeemer into the hands of the Gentiles! Wonder, O heavens, and be amazed, O earth! Worms of the dust are rejecting and delivering up their Creator and their Lord, who become as one of them to save them, and they are

thirsting for his blood. Oh, horrible ! But, alas and I have been as bad; you and I, my brethren, been *enemies* of the Saviour; therefore, let us be penitential, heart-broken. Let us learn to w. pitch of wickedness our hearts would go, unstrained by divine grace; let us learn more of exceeding love of Jesus, which passeth knowledge learning, to adore.

V.

THE WORLD'S TREATMENT.

"And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me : and it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me ; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound : and he was there in the prison."—Gen. xxxix. 17—20.

Living, my brethren, as we do, in a fallen world, beholding sin every day and everywhere around us, feeling it also continually in our own hearts, we are too apt to forget its terribleness, and to look upon it with less horror than the Word of God does. Oh, my brethren, I feel there is an intensity in sin which neither you, nor I, nor any creature, can fully understand. We do but see something of its awful consequences, but to behold it as it is, and as it appears in the light of the countenance of a holy God, I believe to be impossible to us. The only thing that God hates in all the universe, that which he is determined to punish upon whomsoever he may find it, be it on man, or angel,

or by imputation on his own Son,—oh, it must be a terrible thing! They must indeed be fools who can mock at sin (Prov. xiv. 9). But since we cannot see it as it is, let us look at some of its consequences. When Adam had to turn his back upon a fair and lovely paradise, he would surely begin to realise that it was an evil and a bitter thing to sin against the Lord. But when he stood over the corpse of his pious Abel, and remembered that he himself had, by bringing sin into the world, been indirectly the cause of his child's death, would it not strike him that there was a profundity in the heinousness of sin, which he had never previously imagined? And as his descendants gradually multiplied, and he marked that in each child there was born in him a proneness to, and love of sin, would not his self-accusations become intenser and yet intenser? Had he been shut in the ark of Noah, and witnessed the terrific judgments that then descended upon a guilty world, or had he stood in the plains of Mamre with Abraham, and beheld the smoke of Sodom ascending as the smoke of a furnace, he would have learnt something more of the horribleness of that sin which he had committed in Paradise. Had he stood by the Cross of Calvary, and witnessed the Son of God himself racked with agony, and dying an accursed death, that the sins of His people might be washed out and forgiven, there *alone* could he have clearly discovered what he had done when he disbelieved and disobeyed God. And if you, dear friends, are not led by the Spirit of God to stand by that Cross, you shall learn *somewhat* of the enormity of sin when the fierce wrath of God shall burst upon your head, set fire to your soul, and condemn you to everlasting torments in

the lake of hell. *There* and *then* shall you be ever learning, yet never able fully, adequately, to come to the knowledge of the terrible truth. Yet look around the world now, and see what sin is even now doing! It blinds; leading the sinner to think less and less of sin, until, at length, it appears almost, if not altogether, harmless. It hardens; searing the conscience so that it ultimately can hear the most awful threatenings, and the most gentle and winning invitations, with scarcely any emotion. It maddens; enveloping the sinner in such a spell, that he can mock God, despise his frown, esteem the groans of a Redeemer as trifles, and laugh himself into hell. It is prolific; no one can ever stop short at one sin,—one sin will produce many, many others, and those others each much blacker and more detestable than its parent. David's lustful look produced adultery, and that adultery led on to murder in its worst form. Gehazi's covetous desire led him to break in act almost every one of the ten commandments. Those feelings of jealousy generated and nursed in the hearts of Joseph's brethren, led them on, at length, to the commission of crimes from which nature herself revolts. That jealousy induced them to resolve on murder,—on the murder of their brother,—of their young brother,—to murder him gradually by starvation; by seeming accident they change their plan, and resign him into the hands of strangers; not only resign, but positively sell him: it induced them to be the voluntary and conscious instruments of devoting him, as they supposed, to a life of servitude, suffering, and ignominy;—far more intolerable for him, prepared to die, than their former intended mode of revenge, *to let him be taken to a foreign land where*

they neither then wished nor expected to see again, to cut him off from all hope of ever again dening his eyes with a sight of his fond father, what in them lay to break their aged parent's heart, all this, I say, was through one spark of envy jealousy, ultimately bursting into a flame which only be quenched in their brother's blood, or tears of banishment and bondage.

Poor Joseph! How oft didst thou weep when thy journey! What were thy emotions when brought down to Egypt; when there was no face to welcome thee, no voice of kindness to cheer when thou wast wholly among foreigners, whose manners, whose language, and whose religion, was so different from thine own! What were thy feelings when placed in the slave-market, among coarse vulgar companions who cannot enter into thy sorrows and who sympathise with thee not at all! How did thy heart flutter when first one handled thee, and another surveyed thee, and a third, some unfeeling wrote on the point of paying down the sum required for thee. And when, at last, thou didst become the property of the captain of the royal guard, and wast conducted into his house, with what timidity didst thou enter to take thy place among thy lord's vassals! How many times, when thou laiest down to sleep that night, didst thou think of home, of Goshen, and of thy father! How didst thou not picture thy father anxiously expecting thy return, and when thou camest not, sighing himself to poignant grief! How often that didst thou contrast thy present hard and strange situation with that couch of thine own home! No father come and tend thee now, Joseph! Thy rest is

limited and uncertain! Soon hast thou to begin the toils of the day, in a place where all are selfish, strange, unfeeling! Dost thou not feel it hard to forgive thy brethren? Do not any bad and angry passions create a storm within thy breast? Poor youth! thou hast the same evil disposition by nature as we have; and, therefore, rise Joseph, pray, pray to the God of thy fathers for grace and strength to forgive them, and to be quiet and resigned in soul under thy heavenly Father's dark dispensation. There, now he is refreshed. God, his God, will not forsake him; his dreams were from God, therefore, they must come true; every trouble has its end as well as its beginning. "May God," thinks he, "be with me, and enable me to serve him in this benighted land, and to glorify his great name!"

A Joseph in Egypt! A Lot in Sodom! An Obadiah in the court of Ahab! A Naaman in Syria! One solitary flower where all else is wilderness! Who can tell where God has not some jewels? Who can point to that spot and surely say, "There Christ is unknown, thence prayer is never breathed"? The Lord's people are oftentimes hidden to others, though well known to him. In the darkest times of Israel's history, seven thousand bent not the knee to Baal. In bygone ages, when Romanism seemed to have covered the christian world, the Lord had still his church, and the gates of hell could not prevail against it. I remember an affecting anecdote in proof of this, narrated in D'Aubigne's well known history. A poor Chartreux monk wrote a confession of his, placed it in a wooden box, and shut up the box in a hole which he had made in the wall of his cell, which remained unknown for hundreds of years. This was his confession.

"O most charitable God! I know that I cannot be saved but by the merits, the most innocent passion, and the death, of thy well-beloved Son. . . . Pious Jesus, my whole salvation is in thy hands. Thou canst not turn away from me the hands of thy love, for they created, they formed, and they redeemed me. With a pen of iron, with much mercy, and in a manner not to be effaced, thou hast inscribed my name on thy side, on thy hands, and on thy feet," &c. And then the historian adds: "Never would Friar Martin's piety have been known, had not his box been found on the 21st of December, 1776, at the taking down of some old walls once forming part of a Chartreux monastery at Basil. How many monasteries may have concealed such treasures!" And, my brethren, if the providence of God leads us to any heathen spot, let us not fear; our bread shall still never be wanting, the waters of life shall still be sure (Isaiah xxxiii. 16). He puts us there to glorify him; let that, then, be our only care. Are you in a family that fear not God?—care only for this, that you may be like salt to leaven them and to preserve them from entire corruption; that you may be a light amid the surrounding darkness, holding forth the word of life. Do they hate you?—care not for it, they hated your Master. Would they expel you from their company?—poor fools, it fared hard with Sodom when Lot went out of it. Did they but treat you kindly, God might, to some degree at least, bless the whole family for your sake. This Potiphar soon discovered, and promptly and wisely acted upon that discovery.

Cheerful and resigned Joseph rises early in the morning. Soon he seeks the overseer to learn the part

which he is to perform. He, pleased with his meekness and promptitude, gives him an easy task, and marks him with his eye. Sometimes, indeed,—could he help it?—Joseph wipes away a silent tear that *will* steal down his face: yet industriously does he proceed with his allotted toil, so that when evening arrives he gets a smile and a word of encouragement from the man, that went to the very heart of our poor Joseph.

On the next day he renews his service, and the next, and at length so wins over the kind old man that he is led to speak favourably of him to Potiphar himself. Years roll on, and Joseph becomes gradually more reconciled to his situation. Not that he has forgotten home; often in his dreams he is still in the vale of Goshen, sitting quietly in his old favourite spot by the brook, and oftentimes, too, enjoying the caresses of his parent. No; but he feels an assurance that God will not forsake him; God, he knows, brought him into the trouble, and God will bring him out. It is astonishing how much he has learnt of divine things, and how much experience he has gained of the ways of the Lord, since his captivity. God was his God before, but now that God appears more precious than ever. Oftener now in prayer can he get access and wrestle with him; often, too, does he feel he is heard; and those, my brethren, are precious times. Know ye, my brethren, what sanctified affliction is? If not, I do indeed pity you. Count and see how many of the Psalms were written when David was in trouble. Notice the pointedness, the struggling with the Lord, the short and emphatic expressions, the language of appropriation, "*My* God," with which those Psalms abound. Certainly were David alive now, I am

sure he would own to you that the power of using one of those expressions, "My God," far more than outweighed all his afflictions. In process of time, Joseph is advanced from one post to another in the household of Potiphar, who has observed his piety, and who is struck with the happy issue which attends all the affairs entrusted to him. Everything difficult is put into his hands, and invariably with a favourable result. Be quiet, Joseph, God has not forsaken thee. Hold thee still on God, wait patiently on him. If his deliverance appears tardy, remember that God is thereby exercising thy faith, and bidding thee to *trust* where thou canst not *trace*. You have already learnt something of the goodness of God in bringing you *into* trouble, you shall yet learn the faithfulness of God in delivering you *out* of your troubles, and now you are experiencing the sweetness of the presence of God which is with you *in* your troubles. It is as necessary you should know the last as either of the other two. Nor does God try thy patience too much; for what means this gradual alleviation of thy servitude, but to evidence to thee that there is a sun behind the clouds, which is ever and anon breaking through them and shall soon scatter them? God is with thee, Joseph, and thou wouldst infinitely rather have him with thee in the trouble, than lack his presence out of the trouble. "The Lord was with him," says Moses (Gen. xxxix. 3), "God was with him," echoes Stephen (Acts vii. 9). You observe, my brethren, that the saints in all ages have prized those assistances and deliverances which God has vouchsafed to those that trusted in him (see Rom. xv. 4). And wherefore? Because they feel that *as he was, so he is*; that he is still the same kind, good

ender, Preserver, and Comforter of his people as he was. That he is as much concerned for us as was for our brethren in former days, that he loves us much as them, and will bless us equally with them, if not in the same manner, yet in the same measure. Remember, my brethren, we have all his heart, Son, his Spirit, himself; that we are his people, the sheep of his pasture; and that he is our faithful, hanging, unchangeable Friend.

After nine years of Joseph's servitude have rolled by, the kind old steward dies. None appearing to Potiphar so well fitted to succeed him as Joseph, he is accordingly promoted to his place. True, it might seem hazardous to entrust a youth of six-and-twenty with so important a post; but then the courtier is a cautious and worldly wise man, and hence he perceives that Joseph is a man of integrity, a man of piety, and that the blessing of the God whom he serves attends him. It is well, my brethren, when any of us, living in a family, it may be, that know not the Lord, shall unconsciously attract their attention, and silently command their respect, by our unobtrusive and holy life. Be assured of this, that if you make a decided profession of religion, many eyes are upon you, watching for your halting. They narrowly observe you, in order that they may have wherewith to soothe their consciences. And if your practice is inconsistent with that profession, you are injuring the cause you pretend to serve. Now, surely, Joseph would experience some rest from his woes, some mitigation of his hard

For "it came to pass from the time that" Potiphar made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's

house for Joseph's sake" (how kind of the good Lord); "and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat" (Gen. xxxix. 5, 6). Surely now Joseph would begin to compare his dreams with his present dignity, and to suppose that he had obtained one moiety of the fulfilment. Not so fast, Joseph, your present rest God only intends for a little breathing time, ere he plunges you yet deeper in affliction. It is sent in mercy by that God who will not too severely send trouble upon trouble, lest you should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. You are not yet out of the bleak and terrible wilderness—what you are now enjoying is merely a little green oasis in its midst.

This elevated position of our Joseph necessarily brings him into communication with the whole household of Potiphar, as well with his family as with his slaves. Now, he might suppose that he would have a little rest from the assaults of Satan. Often when at his daily toil, had he been tempted to murmur and repine at the hard lot which Providence had seemed to destine for him. Sometimes, too,—who can doubt it? he was but a man,—sometimes, I say, hard thoughts of God would steal across his breast, and cause so terrible a battle there, as none but a believer can understand. But now perhaps he would think, "Satan must desist; for I do see clearly God has not forsaken me." No state of life, O Joseph, is exempt from its peculiar snares. Thy path to glory is thickly beset with enemies. Never can you lay down your armour until you lay down your life. Satan, your great

adversary, is a fallen archangel, and knows how to temper his temptations according to the circumstances, habits, and inclinations of every individual. The experience of two thousand five hundred years has made him intimately acquainted with the human heart, and therefore is he enabled very skilfully to change, modify, colour, and hide his attacks as the case may require. Sometimes he may appear as the angel of darkness; but often, oftener does he appear as the angel of light; and, more frequently still, he does not appear at all, but makes use of some acquaintance, some friend of ours or other, whereby we may better be thrown off our guard. Or, again, has he been tempting thee to murmur, to curse God and die? and hast thou, through sovereign grace, been preserved as a monument of divine love? Has he left thee for a season? He will return again, O Joseph. He will try to come unexpectedly; he will certainly come in another garb. Thou art young, well he knows it, and, therefore, it is not unlikely that he should enter into some member of that family, and so present the golden cup of pleasure to thy thirsty lips. Mark ye well that woman's glances,—she meaneth not well to thee, O Joseph. She is but the poor tool of Satan, who desires to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat. Trust not thine eyes, Joseph,—flee her presence,—be instant in prayer for grace to keep every avenue of thine heart; for, oh, remember, that in the eye of the holy God, in whose sight our sinful hearts are transparent, one look of lust is adultery (Matt. v. 28). Abstain from all appearance of evil. Guard against the first inclinations to sin.

Yes, my brethren, as wheat in a sieve, so weak are

we. What need then have we to pray, "Hold us in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Pardon me, my brethren, if I own to you a conviction that has been long on my mind, that these false incitements are more dangerous weapons of temptation than are commonly supposed. Breaches of the seventh commandment are, I fear, too much considered as sins which only tyros in divine things are tempted to commit. I fear it, because wherever there is a false security, there it is likely Satan will attack you. How many high professors have been cast down into the mire through this sin! Yea, how many children of God have here let Satan get an advantage over them. The cases of Lot, Judah, Samson, and Solomon, and many others, all loudly proclaim, "sons of men, ye are weak as water." That one of the greatest dangers is to think he can stand; let every one especially take heed lest he fall (1 Cor. x.

Well, this new temptation of Joseph becomes more violent. He is obliged to be about the house, his duties compel him. There, that woman, the daughter of Potiphar, the servant of Satan, is the subject of his base passion: Joseph is the object of her love. At first, by glances, she proceeds to hints; waxing more bold, she thence to solicitations and strong importunities. The rest be told in the words of Holy Writ: "The master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto her, The master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what I do with thee in the house, and he hath committed all his power to my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife:

can I do this great wickedness, and sin against
 ? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph
 by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by
 or to *be with her*. And it came to pass about
 time, that Joseph went into the house to do his
 mess; and there was none of the men of the house
 within. And she caught him by his garment,
 and said, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her
 hand, and *fled*, and got him out." Now what is it,
 brethren, I see most to marvel at in this story?
 Is it at the bold effrontery of this wicked woman?
 Is it at the skilful tact of Satan? Is it at his unwise
 furious precipitation when crossed in his schemes?
 Is it at the chastity and holiness of Joseph? Is it
 at the knowledge of his own heart, which he evinced
 when he dared not to trust himself in that woman's
 company more than his duties obliged him? It is
 none of these. What I see most to marvel at and
 admire, is the loving-kindness of that God that com-
 manded thus to preserve a poor worm of the dust,
 a sinful one too, from so terrible a sin; and the
 mightiness and the efficacy of that grace which thus
 sustained Joseph in its arms, and placed in his hands
 the shield, whereby he was enabled to quench all the
 darts of the wicked one. Here, my brethren,
 behold the glory of God! That God should conquer
 sin is no marvel; but that God could thus take
 care of a bruised reed, letting the strong man's arm
 rest against it, yet not break it,—of smoking flax,
 and of strong floods of temptation to go over it, yet not
 crush it; that God, I say, should so take care of
 us as we, who are too often crushed before a moth,
 whom of ourselves no assault is too trivial to be

despised, whom Satan hath worsted these hundred thousands of times, whose hearts are as tinder, as the spark; that we should be enabled to resist and resist him successfully, does indeed greatly to the glory of God, whilst it covers Satan with minious confusion. Well may he flee away from us when *we* resist him, for he recognises grace is fighting for us—the grace of that who hurled him down from heaven. Let this example lead us to pray, “Oh, my God, sanctify wholly, body, soul, and spirit. Give *me* a conscience, make me as afraid of committing sin, thereby grieving thee. Oh, make me entirely for Christ’s sake.”

Now is this woman’s love transformed into hate, her boldness into satanic cunning. It is formed, and quickly is it acted upon. She loses possession of Joseph’s upper garment, which she caught hold of when she solicited him, and in his anxiety to get away from her allurement left in her hands. That garment, the memorial of her own unfaithfulness, she produces to her husband as evidence of his servant’s ingratitude. “The upper garment,” says this hypocritical harlot to Potiphar, “which thou hast brought unto us, came in to mock me: and it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.” Had a mine exploded at the feet of Potiphar, he could not have been more amazed than he was when he heard these words. What! to be that he who had hitherto appeared so devout a worshiper of his God, and who had certainly served *him* so faithfully and so laboriously, that he was

such an attempt? Yes, the evidence was overwhelming, there was his own wife's testimony, and there was the garment; yes, it was undoubtedly Joseph's. Instantly he summons him into his presence; the charge is repeated before him; the poor youth, wildered at its baseness and cruelty, and unwilling to criminate his mistress, especially as he perceives on his angry countenance that his master has already sided against him, commits his cause to Him that judges righteously, hangs down his head, and is silent. Well now is it for Joseph that no sword is in the hands of the indignant Potiphar, who, scarcely knowing what he says, summoning his attendants, bids them conduct the youth to the royal prison. Sorrowfully they execute their commission, for Joseph is beloved by them. "His feet they hurt with fetters; he is laid* in iron" (Psalm cv. 18). The noise of the ponderous bolt on without rings upon his ears, and sinks into his heart. Thus suddenly are his brightening prospects enclouded; the fond expectation of the near fulfilment of his dreams is dashed to the ground; the favourable opinion of his master has gone; he is fully believed to be a culprit, and a culprit too of no ordinary character; and, after ten years of faithful servitude, he finds himself further from his home, and from his father's embrace, than he was at their beginning. He looks around at the cold dank walls, and glances to his little grated window, and his heart,—

! he puts his hand upon it to quiet its throbbings. And then the thought returns to him, "Thou art viewed as an adulterer, as a wretched ingrate towards

* Literally "his soul came into iron;" denoting the poignant anguish of him and at being viewed and treated as a culprit.

a beneficent master, and here thou art to be immured for life." "For life," thinks he, "oh, no; God will yet keep to his promise to me." He lifts his eye upwards, pours out his soul to the God of the troubled, and is refreshed. "My master," he afterwards ejaculates, "I have served you faithfully, and I did not expect this at your hands; but I forgive you, I forgive you."

My brethren, does this move you? Does the tear stand in your eye at the recital of this tale of woe; at the remembrance that if Joseph had been guilty he had not been there, but that, because innocent, therefore he was there? Reserve those tears whilst I tell you the story of the "Man of Sorrows." And, as you listen, picture to your minds himself standing before you, and thus addressing you, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow" (Lam. i. xii).

Excepting Eden's transient picture, the world has but once beheld the fair and lovely spectacle of a perfectly holy man. But that One we are assured from Divine authority was so entirely holy, that if we would learn what unsullied purity really is, we have but to contemplate his life. All other men have been or are dead in trespasses and sins, that is, alive to nothing else, steeped in sin. Even the faint virtues of the saints of God have had very much of imperfection and sin in them. "All our righteousness," says the evangelical prophet, "are as filthy rags" (Isaiah lxiv. 6). Oh, what a contrast there must have been presented to the eyes of those heavenly beings capable of considering it, when the only Son of God trod this lower world! Light, bright as the throne of God *itself*, in the midst of darkness denser far than that

which once covered Egypt. Incarnate holiness amid a race of sinners. As God, he was holiness itself; and as man, he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Peter ii. 22). He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26). It was absolutely necessary that he who should atone for our sins, should have none of his own, otherwise his sufferings had been but the due reward of those sins. But he was verily and indeed a "Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter i. 19; Exodus xii. 5). Sin could not touch him. Temptation could no more injure him than a spark set on fire the ocean. He was necessarily and divinely holy. And then the manner of his conception was supernatural, in order that he might not inherit any taint of original sin, on which account he was spoken of by the angel before his birth as *το ἅγιον*, "the holy thing" (Luke i. 35). Hence the apostle speaks of God as sending his Son, not "in sinful flesh," but "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). And, indeed, if you read through the gospels with the simple object in view of noticing how powerless temptation was with him, that there was no part in him which was vulnerable, you will find it a very interesting study. When I look at him when twelve years of age, accompanying his mother, in accordance with her wish, back to Nazareth, and being "subject" unto her, I feel it hard to realise that he was at the same time her God and Saviour (Luke i. 47), and I involuntarily exclaim, Truly, truly, he "learned obedience" (Heb. v. 8). But especially do I love to behold him coping with Satan in the wilderness. Then was he in all points tempted, yet without sin (Heb. iv. 15). The fiery darts of the

wicked one were discharged against a rock of :
 Then did that arch-rebel discover that the
 Adam was very different from the first.*
 menced like as he had done in Eden, by atten
 inject a doubt. Then when he discovered
 Saviour's confidence in his Father's care :
 unshaken, could not be weakened, and that t
 fidence was grounded on the written word
 then did he attempt by that very word itsel
 him onward but one narrow step further, i
 wavering assurance into bold presumption.]
 to follow him, like the hawk its prey, into
 nest—the nest of the sacred Scriptures, with
 he found the Holy One had entrenched himsel
 first temptation he had tried to get him dow
 second to trip him up. In the first, Satan st
 were before Christ endeavouring to *pull* him c

* A few annotations on the scene in the wilderness may not be u
 St. Luke relates the several temptations in a different order to
 Matthew ; but it is believed that the latter Evangelist places the
 gically, as he uses the words, "then" and "again," in his acc
 St. Luke does not. The scene is in the wilderness, and among th
 (Mark. i. 13), as if to teach us that the second Adam took up the
 the first threw it down. The first temptation was to the gratifi
flesh,—the very one presented to our forefather, and which prov
 for him. The second temptation, to presumption, was peculi
 The third was to love of the *world*. All temptations can
 headed under one or another of these heads: the world, the s
 devil ; and therefore we may truly say, that on this occasion
 Redeemer was in all points tempted like as we are (Heb. iv. 15). S
 explains the words, "for a season," in Luke iv. 13, by saying,
 returned to the attack in the garden of Gethsemane; and that Ch
 three times, then denoted that Satan three times tempted him ;
 wilderness he tempted Christ, "*per januam voluptatis*," through
 pleasure ; and in the garden, "*per januam timoris*," through the
 Were this true, we should have to infer that Satan never tempted
 all through his ministry ; and secondly, that in the wilderness (o
 our way back again into Paradise, and in Gethsemane from the
 through to glory !

the second, he stood as it were behind Christ to *push* him down. In each attempt he miserably failed, and Christ gloriously triumphed. Doubtless this second defeat would ten times more discourage and frighten Satan than the first. Often had he met with saints who had been enabled in some degree to reject his first temptation, but who yet had succumbed to the second; who, when preserved from some sin of the flesh, had given way to self-complacency and self-esteem; but here now was a man before him perfectly immoveable. The fetid air of hell that Satan breathed could not tarnish one so bright, so pure as he was. How dismayed, how bewildered, he must have been. Hitherto he must have fancied himself almost a god. Never before had mortal man been proof against his wiles. Monarchs and peasants, hoary heads and smiling youths, sage philosophers and untutored savages, all had been an easy prey for him. Nineveh, Babylon, Macedon, and Rome, had gladly submitted to his sway and kissed their chains. Truly, a few individuals had been rescued from his grasp by Omnipotent Grace, but even those had "scarcely" (1 Peter iv. 18) escaped, so many were the wounds and so deep the gashes he had given them. But this man had never owned, had never felt his power. Like a rock amid the foaming billows, so was the Immaculate Redeemer amid temptation. The spray might dash against its perpendicular sides, only to fall back again into the waves below! Another vain and ineffectual attempt does Satan now make to allure the Saviour from the path of duty. He knows how many high professors have been captivated and slain by the blandishments of an ensnaring world. He knows, further,

how hard it is to flesh and blood to take up the Cross, and how many in the day of trial have shunned it. These two temptations Satan combines, and determines to present them together to the mind of the Saviour. He is allowed to carry him through the air, for Christ seeks not to avoid the conflict, and to place him on the summit of the great eastern porch* of the temple, which was three hundred and eighty-five feet high; and then it is given to him to pass in panoramic vision all the kingdoms of the world before the eye of the Holy One, after which he says, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Here is universal empire for thee, only first do fealty to me as thy liege lord and master. The potency of this charm, my brethren, I feel few are at all aware of, because the spell is on themselves. Myriads upon myriads of immortal souls are incessantly panting for though it be but the smallest part of this magnificent prospect to be presented to them; and if they do not attain their desires they die, choked with feverish thirst (1 Tim. vi. 9). Others who do at all succeed, are still unsatisfied, the ultimate object of their wishes removes further onwards. And if some few do at length secure the painted butterfly, miserable souls, they wax proud, grow dizzy, and — die! Whilst most fall into the chasm of hell from the base of the mountain, through their eyes being fixed too intently upon that part above their heads, and not a few are continually tumbling headlong therein as they are scrambling up its sides, *they* have reached the top, but there their heads get mazy, they fall, and great indeed and terrible is their fall. Brethren, not in vain was

* See Middleton on the Greek Article on the words *ἐπὶ τὸ πτερυγιον*.

the seventy-third Psalm written. The names of many could I mention who once seemed pious and promised fair, but whom a little worldly success intoxicated, hardened, and ruined. Let your motto and mine be that of Asaph, with which he closes his solemn meditation referred to, "It is good for me to draw near God" (Psalm lxxiii. 28).

But this was not all of the temptation that was presented to Jesus; for in a certain sense, yea, in a truer sense than ever Satan could be, Jesus is the king of the world. You remember, soon after he burst the bands of the tomb, his language to his disciples was, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth!" (Matt. xxviii. 18.) Hence, then, whether Satan surrendered this power to Jesus willingly or unwillingly, was immaterial, since he was destined by the will of God to have it. Where, then, lay the point of the temptation? Here: God had indeed determined to give the divine Mediator all the kingdoms of the world for his possession; but then he had placed the Cross with all its concomitant agonies and terrors to be endured first: he had said, "First the Cross, and then the Crown." But Satan said, "Give up the Cross, it will be very, very painful, here is a much easier way, do obeisance to me and all is thine." God's plan was, Subdue the hearts and *then* the necks of thy sinful foes; Satan's was, Be a second Augustus, a second Alexander, only on a larger scale,—be, in fact, what the Jews, thy subjects, are seeking for,—a merely temporal king. Then readily will they join thy standard, and soon shall all thine enemies be subdued unto thee. The cross will be very bitter, forego it; snatch the crown now. And which of us, my christian

friends, is a stranger to a similar assault of the wicked one? How often has he not attempted to scare us from duty, and to allure us into the paths of pleasure! Oftentimes when our way has laid through much tribulation, has he not suggested a *little* temporising, a *little* worldly prudence, which would, he said, conduct us to the same place as the king's high road, and by which all the trouble would be avoided? The holy dreamer* has not omitted to make mention of this temptation in his Pilgrim, nor forgotten its potency, when he describes that such men as Christian and Faithful were seduced by it. Judge, then, my brethren, of the craft of Satan, when he conjoined these two temptations, and brought them to bear at the same instant upon the mind of the Saviour.

How perilous that moment, might any unbeliever in the Deity of Christ well think, might any one who doubts the Redeemer's impeccability. If he accedes, he is indeed king,—but we are ruined for ever; our sins we must suffer for ourselves, as well as we can, in everlasting torment. But sing, O heavens, and exult, O earth, the holy Lamb of God calmly replies—and our hearts may well throb as we listen to his simple, innocent, placid, decided, joy-inspiring words—"Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Unlike the literal Joseph, our Joseph need not be afraid to encounter Satan and the snares of the world; and, therefore, he does not flee,—not he,—he bids them flee from him. "Then the devil leaveth him," says the sacred narrative,—leaving us to imagine his consternation. And, holy Saviour, whilst angels

* Bunyan.

draw near and minister to thy wants, help thy saints and me to sing the psalm of praise to thee, thou almighty Conqueror! Worthy is the Lamb!

My brethren, your hearts feel the truth of what Scripture repeatedly declares, that, ere you can stand without dismay in the presence of the holy God, you need a righteousness perfect and complete in every part.* There are three ways in which men have sought to obtain this. Some, yea, very many, have attempted to clothe themselves in their own righteousness, which the Scripture emphatically declares to be "filthy rags" (Isaiah lxiv. 6). Since everything we do is stained with sin, to think of being justified by our own righteousness, is to think of being justified by our sins. Others, feeling the vanity of such an attempt, have sought, without the least warrant from Scripture, to join their own righteousness and that of Christ together,—to join a filthy rag to a wedding garment. The Jewish lawgiver taught the ancient Israelites better: "Thou shalt not," says he, "wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together" (Deut. xxii. 11; Lev. xix. 19). How different, too, are they from the holy Paul, who esteemed all things else as a real "loss," yea, as "dung," so that he might "win Christ, and be found in him, not having"

* Micah's conscience bore witness to the truth of this. He seems to cast his eyes wistfully around him, in order to discover something, relying on which he may come boldly into the presence of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. In his distress the Lord tells him what he esteems "good;" and then the prophet exultingly continues, "God hath shewed thee, O man, what is good." What that "good" was the Lord also had shewed to Abel, who had brought the blood of a pure and spotless lamb, shewing that, doing so, he did indeed that which was "good." Hence, in the Lord's subsequent expostulation with Cain, he uses the same word as Micah does—*יָשָׁר* (Gen. iv. 7, with Micah vi. 8).

his "own righteousness, which is of the law, which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. iii. 8, 9). To observe, is the third way; the renouncing trusting *alone* in the blood and righteous Son of God (see Zech. iii. 3—5). I need now to prove to you that this last is God's righteousness you have often heard me do. The Scriptures are numerous and plain upon this point, especially the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. The righteousness of Christ is twofold, comprising his divine and all his human righteousness, and had a specimen of how spotless was this righteousness. When you behold Satan run ingloriously from before the victorious Son of God, if you are wise, you will feel the ground firm under your feet. You will begin to dare to surmount the law of God in all its length and breadth, for you will yourself have so often broken, for you will find my righteousness, has kept it, kept it firm. And then when you remember that even though you are but that the very righteousness which belongs to God is yours too, you may well lift your head. This latter idea—that of the righteousness being ours—Paul particularly delights to use, as, for instance, in the passage already quoted (1 Cor. i. 30; Rom. iii. 22). Oh, brethren, when you grasp this sublime truth, that, trusting in Christ, you have the very righteousness of God himself, I can assure you, I am bold. Death loses its sting, and the judgment terrors, when this is realised and appreciated, may well pass fearless through all the ranks of the angels, when I reflect that I have a righteous

the splendour of which they must be dazzled, at the purity of which they may well turn pale. Confidently and confidently can I look up into my Father's eyes; for why? I have on the righteousness of his only begotten Son; *in Christ, I am as holy as God himself*. Not only washed in the blood, but also clothed in the righteousness of Christ, I exult, I glory, according as it is written, "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord" (Isaiah xlv. 24, 25; 1 Cor. i. 30, 31).

One other time, at least, did Satan attack Christ, and what is very remarkable, with the identical temptation in which he had last so miserably failed in the wilderness. Perhaps he thought that then, through being foiled twice immediately before, he had been thrown off his guard, and spoken out his desires too plainly. Be this as it may, it is certain he came in a manner cunning enough this time. Then he had said, "If thou wilt *worship me*," enough, *he* thought, to revolt the soul of the holy Son of God. But all that blindness he avoids now. The case I allude to is this:* Jesus had been making many precious promises to Peter as the representative of his church. As delicate food to a dainty stomach, so were these blessed words to Peter's soul. They were too loaded, too heavily freighted, with the riches of heaven for his poor soul. Hence, when Christ went on to say that he must suffer many things, the elated Peter "took him," that is, laid hold of him by the shoulder, and began to rebuke him, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." As much as to say, God forbid that you should endure the cross; no, Lord, take the crown without. I have already warned you,

* Matthew xvi. 13—23.

beloved friends, that Satan oftentimes comes in the guise of a friend, a father, a mother, a sister, a wife, or a child. Then you are far less prone to suspect his presence, and so you are unaware of the charm in which you are encircled. Not so Christ. He saw through the whole thing in an instant,—he perceived the arch fiend lurking as it were behind Peter,—that the apostle had unconsciously, yet truly, lent himself to the purposes of the wicked one. Then he gave utterance to those words of thunder, checking Peter, indeed, but more particularly the tempter, “Get thee behind me Satan; for thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” As if he had said, “I see thee, O Satan, and I know thy devices, depart; and inasmuch as thou, O Peter, hast taught me to regard my own ease rather than God’s glory, know thou wast inspired by Satan himself thus to tempt me.” How Peter must have been astonished when he heard that he had been made the tool of the tempter! But as for man’s arch-foe himself, he retreats discomfited, finding that he has another and more potent adversary to cope with than that one he had met in Eden.

Then, if from these more set temptations of Satan and more striking and more glorious victories of Jesus you descend to watch the ordinary life of the Saviour as he moves among a race of sinners, the same conviction of his perfect and unsullied purity will continually force itself upon your minds. Like them in all other things, from the slightest taint of sin he was entirely free (Heb. ii. 17, and iv. 15). Freely did he mix with sinners, freely did he receive them to his arms, but never did they, could they pollute him, invariably do

enefit and bless them. Like the meridian sun, whose heat nothing is hid, whose rays penetrate the stagnant morass, and exhale the mephitic vapors of the moat that swarms with life, yet remains clear and bright as the day it first began to shine, as the spotless Lamb of God. Intensely jealous of Father's honour, not seeking his own (John viii. —with a will wholly absorbed in the will of God, always those things that pleased him (John viii. —inflexibly bent on accomplishing, and pausing only when he had finished, the work which God had given him to do (Luke iii. 49; John xvii. 4), and whilst working with it esteeming it his meat and drink (John iv. 34);—unwearied in doing good, traveling from city to city and from village to village seeking lost sheep, healing the diseased, rescuing the perishing, pardoning the contrite, warning the sinner, rebuking boldly the hypocrite, diffusing life, and health, and peace, and joy around him;—his days spent in preaching in the temple, his nights in praying on the mountain (Luke xxi. 37);—meek under provocations, and passive under injuries (1 Peter ii. 23);—forfeiting food and rest, and every comfort, yea, and ultimately his very life, to his Father's glory and to the salvation of the souls he came to save;—in all and everything, in thought, and word, and deed, he was harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. His bitterest enemies even when challenged were unable to point to a single flaw in his unblemished character (John viii. 46). Satan, that wily foe, who when he tempts us says that such a thing is no sin, when we have yielded, accuses us to God and to our own consciences, bidding us despair of pardon, even

he was unable to fasten upon anything at all sinful in Jesus (John xiv. 30). Yea, more, since he was the Son of God, he could bear witness of himself (John viii. 14), and his witness would be true; and of himself he gave this testimony, "I do always those things that please" the Father (John viii. 29). To that Father he protested thus in his last and memorable prayer: "I have glorified thee on earth" (John xvii. 4). And to crown all, the Father himself declared the perfect complacency with which he beheld his holy Son Jesus, when he, the omniscient Judge himself, uttered these words from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. iii. 17).

Then do you say, my brethren, wherefore did the world reject him? Wherefore did they condemn him as a malefactor, crucify him between two thieves, so that he might be "numbered with transgressors" (Isaiah liii. 12), since he was so perfectly, so divinely, holy? Do you ask this, my brethren? If so, you do, indeed, shew your ignorance of the wickedness of the world, and of the inveterate hostility with which sinners regard any, even the least, approximation to the character of God. Go ye and learn what that meaneth: "The carnal mind is enmity against God" (Rom. viii. 7). The faintest resemblance in us to the holiness of God is sure to entail upon us keen and untiring hatred and opposition; that is, if the Word of God be true (Matt. x. 34, 35). Do you ask, then, why are we not more hated? The answer is very easy,—because we are not holier and more decided for God. Since Jesus was of consummate purity, therefore did the harlot world pursue him with unrelenting animosity, to be satiated only in his heart's blood.

How could those ungodly sinners, amongst whom he lived, be expected to brook his searching words, his terrible denunciations, his open exposures, of their sham, and hollow, and tinsel piety? How could they be expected to endure his piercing glance, before which they quailed, and which shewed them that he knew them through and through? Had Jesus been a sinner like themselves, they would have loved him as much as sinners can do, and as they did love his brethren after the flesh. But as he himself testified to them, "The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (John vii. 7). Here, then, my brethren, is the answer to your question. The world, says Christ, hated him, because he testified of it that its works were evil. (See, also, John i. 5, and compare it with John iii. 19.) Here, then, is the key, my brethren, which reveals the secret cause of all the opposition he encountered, and of all the treatment he received. Can you wonder any longer at those infuriated men rising against him, and ceasing not until they have embued their hands in his blood? Can you wonder at that savage crew of priests and people dragging him along to the hall of the Procurator, and yet, forsooth, so very sanctimonious that they themselves will not cross his threshold, but send Jesus in alone, fearing lest they should be defiled by contact with a heathen, such as Pilate was, and thereby be incapacitated from eating the passover. Ah, how common is it to strain off a gnat, whilst we swallow down a camel. Then when Pilate sends him to Herod, and Herod with his men of war mock him, and set him at nought, and array him in *scarlet robes*, deriding his kingly claims,

ah, we no longer wonder ; the cause is, they feel they have a holy soul in their power, and therefore will they wreak their vengeance on him. And then, when he is led to Pilate again, and Pilate, having examined him, judicially pronounces him innocent, frankly avowing that he finds no fault in Jesus (Luke xxiii. 14), we might begin to breathe and take courage, and fondly hope that Jesus will be released, did we not remember that this was his very crime—a crime unpardonable in the eyes of ferocious wretches—the crime of being innocent. Hence when a real villain is proposed to them as a fit object of their rage, their kindred souls feel a sympathy for him, and the cry bursts out from every individual of the assembled crowd, “Not this man, but Barabbas.” The wolves and the sheep who are yet unregenerate each bleat for the Shepherd’s blood. “Crucify him, crucify him,” the whole multitude exclaim. The church differs in nothing from the world in herself; she is hewn out of the rock, she is dug out of the pit (Isaiah li. 1). All of us had a voice in that infatuated shriek. You and I, my brethren, are as guilty as any one else in the crowd. However we may be changed now, this is certain, once we were like them. We saw no beauty in Jesus that we should desire him (Isaiah liii. 2). We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Eph. ii. 3). How many of those who on the day of Pentecost cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts ii. 37)—how many of those priests who so soon afterwards, by the grace of that Spirit of God, who melts whom he will (Rom. ix. 18), were obedient to the faith of Jesus (Acts vi. 7)—how many, I say, of such as these, being *then unconverted*, helped to swell the harmony of that

cry, "Release Barabbas, crucify Jesus," the great day alone can determine. Who made that difference, that great and eternal difference, between some and others, we shall have time to review in the next chapter. But now, to use the comparison which the Saviour himself then made, they are all as a set of ravening lions or of hungry dogs (Psalm xxii. 11—16). One more ineffectual attempt does the vacillating Pilate make to rid this innocent Lamb out of their hands. He gives orders for him to be scourged. The soldiers, glad to have in their hands the reputed King of the Jews, the nation they so much hate, the people which has given them so much trouble, determine now to gratify their long pent-up malice on the head of this inoffending victim, and proceed to execute their commission. "This is their king," whisper they one to another, as they strip him unceremoniously from his clothing. Then are his hands tied together to the bottom of a short post, so as to make his sacred body form a curve, which, while it presented a fairer surface for the cruel rod, also brought out into prominence its muscles and other sensitive parts. The rod was made of leathern thongs loaded with lead at the extremities. And then the blows begin, and the flesh soon hangs in lumps on his back. There are two incidental proofs afforded us that the scourging which Jesus received was very severe; one, that he was unable to carry the cross himself, and the other, that he expired when crucified much sooner than was usual. And now Pilate again presents him to the people, as much as to say, 'Is this the man whom you pretend to dread and would vainly induce me?' There stands the Saviour, elevated by a few stone steps in the sight of all the people. Look

at his purple robe, emblematic of our sins. his crown of thorns, indented into his sacred around, and causing the blood to drop on to the robe, as if to say, "See how your sins are away." Then look at Barabbas there on the side, and Pilate in vain seeking to induce the people to spare and pity him who is already so cruelly punished though innocent, and to gratify their malicious robber chieftain, who has by his crimes over again forfeited his life. The multitude, roused by the smell of blood, imperiously announce and make known their demands, as well by their actions as by their words. At length Pilate, the weak and vacillating Pilate, unable any longer to resist the mob, reluctantly releases Barabbas, and delivers Jesus to be crucified. The culprit is safe, the innocent demned. Now the Levitical type shadowed by the scape-goat Azazel or scape-goat,* is being fulfilled in Barabbas. The scape-goat, you know, had no sins, and yet was sent free (verse 22), whilst the goat was slain which had no sin. You and I are set free, through Jesus, who is innocent, takes our place, and being slain for us. "He hath made for us who knew no sin, that we might manifest the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Then is the Redeemer led away to Calvary, to the place of execution. A few women take pity on the mob of priests, Pharisees, and people, and with joy at having attained the object of their desire, they follow Him who so faithfully reproved their sins, will not condemn them no more. He who twice cleansed the temple

* Read the whole of the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus, especially the 7th to the 22nd verse.

the buyers and sellers, will not repeat it a third time. This is he, think they, that troubled Israel, at last we have him, and die he shall. With such thoughts as these they urge on the object of their hate, and soon they arrive at Calvary. Speedily the cross is fixed into the ground, and the rope attached to it. Then with triumphant shouts the poor victim is brought right underneath the cross, and the ropes put under his arms. A moment's pause, and then he is drawn up, the ladder is planted, the executioner ascends, the sufferer's hand is seized, the cruel nail is ready, the hammer gleams through the air, and Christ is crucified. There may my sins be too, there may my lusts be nailed, here may I live, here may all our hearts be broken, subdued to Jesus for ever. Boanerges, the son of thunder, said, "God is love," which words contain the thunder of the gospel. And here is the thunder-bolt, the Cross of Christ ; hard indeed must we be if this Cross does not rive our hearts in twain, and tear away every idol therefrom. Which that it may do, may the Lord in mercy grant for Christ's sake. Amen.



VI.

THE LOWLY ARBITER.

"And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: but he hanged the chief baker; as Joseph had interpreted to him."—Gen. xl. 21, 22.

Among the many pictures of heaven, beloved friends, which are presented to our enraptured gaze in the word of God, one of the most cheering and consolatory is that of a rest. And what a rest! Think where it is. In the bosom of Jesus! (John xiv. 3.) And for how long it shall last. For ever! for ever! Listen,—God shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 3, 4). Truly, these are ravishing words. There is the christian *at home*, in the arms of his God, who, like an affectionate parent, is caressing his child, hushing its sobs, and gently wiping away* its tears. How sweet prospect! May God grant, dear friends, that such

* Εξαλείψει. Literally, God shall "wipe out" the tears. An earthly parent can wipe them away, but then others return in their place; but God will "wipe out" the tears, that is, he will effectually and for ever remove the very sources of all the tears (Rev. vii. 17, and xxi. 4).

may presently be our blessed lot. But, nev these words, sweet as they undoubtedly an presuppose that those same blessed ones, reached that rest, were well versed in sorrow suffering. Rest is for the weary; that bes those whose cheeks have been much furrow care, and oft washed with briny tears. We however, left to inferences on such a subject It is emphatically said in another place of the tical individuals, "They came out of great trib (Rev. vii. 14). Not merely, you observe, "trib but "*great* tribulation." And this, too, is s out any exception being made. All and every attains that rest, first undergoes this great tr It is God's wise, and good, and irreversible that "we *must* through much tribulation e his kingdom." From this law no christian be exempt. Earthly joys and earthly comfort esteems, comparatively speaking, as baubles; a fore, very frequently he deals them with a m hand on the world's children than on his Luke xvi. 25). For his own, he has some store much better—Himself; and, therefore have them, whilst they are away from ho "strangers and pilgrims" (1 Peter ii. 11). teaches by his grace to esteem the very " for Christ's sake "better riches than the trea the world (Heb. xi. 26). Then he "exercis "chastening," which although, whilst being seems not joyous, but grievous, he bids the its result, he comforts them with the wor wards" (Heb. xii. 11). He assures them t because they are "sons," and not "bastards,

scourges them. God, if I may so speak, takes great pains with his children, whom he has destined to be partakers of his holiness. Are we in his sight as silver? * Then we must be put in the crucible (Psalm lvi. 10; Zech. xiii. 9). Does he esteem us as gold? Then we must be "tried in the fire" (1 Peter i. 7), "in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah xlviii. 10). Are we his jewels? Then we must be polished (Mal. iii. 17). You will not, I am sure, my brethren, if you yourselves know what furnace-work is, say that I insist too much upon this point; no, you will feel the necessity of all the divine consolation that can be administered. A spiritually-proud Hezekiah, and a worldly-proud Nebuchadnezzar, are afflicted and humbled, whilst many other haughty and vain men are left to fill up the measure of their iniquities. The disobedient, deceived, though christian prophet, is slain, whilst the deceiver is allowed to live out the whole measure of his days, and to come to his grave in peace (1 Kings xiii). Out of a family of twelve children, the only pious one among them is subjected to accumulated and extreme affliction, whilst, as for the others who are wicked, not one sorrow crosses their path. Here is Joseph, who fears God (Gen. xlii. 18), in prison, yea, and in prison, too, because he fears him, whilst his brethren, virtually fratricides, walk at large, and "do even what they lust."

Doubtless the feelings of the youthful prisoner must have been, at times, poignant in the extreme. Imagine, my brethren, some scheme or other, on the accomplish-

* The purifier of silver keeps his eye steadfastly fixed upon the metal in the crucible; nor does he ever judge it sufficiently clear and bright, until he can see his own image reflected in it. How like God's work with us!

ment of which a man has had his heart fixed for a time; gradually one part is achieved, and then another; his hopes are excited more and more; at length sanguine does he become, that he is wont to call as if it were already done; the design itself near completion; when, lo, suddenly, the fair fabric of years' toil is dashed to the ground. Such, doubt must have been, to no small extent, the state of Joseph's mind, when he first found himself really a prisoner. How oft would he not try and persuade himself that it was but a dream! He had mapped out his own mind, so nicely mapped out the way in which he thought he was to attain the honours which his dreams portended. For ten years everything went on according to his expectations; he was diligent, faithful, and obedient; his master influential, and discriminating; but then he had expected the higher he rose, the yet quicker he would rise; the remaining steps of the ascent were now, all of them plainly discernible,—they were neither many nor difficult ones, when, lo, to his consternation, he found himself not a slave merely, as he had been when he entered Potiphar's house, but a prisoner, and a prisoner only, but a prisoner viewed as guilty of the basest and blackest of crimes imaginable.

Poor Joseph! how thy heart must have sunk within thee, when day after day, and week after week, nothing disturbed the silence of thy prison, save the solitary attendant, who once every day, without saying a word, brought thee thy bread and water, the clank of thine own chains, and the heavy tread of the gaoler. But God is with thee, Joseph, and it is he who yet enables thee to maintain thy confidence

him! Dost thou still love him? Dost thou still trust him? Darest thou to believe that there is no chance work even in this? Ah, that is the very thing that consoles thee; it is now being engraved on thy heart what afterwards thou shalt be enabled to express to thy brethren,—“It was not *you* that sent me hither, but *God*” (Gen. xlv. 8). Art thou unhappy, poor sufferer? At times, perhaps, thou art prone to be, but, ah, at other times thou art enabled to commune so familiarly with the God of thy fathers, that thy prison appears a palace. Thou hast one comfort yet left thee, O Joseph, and that a great one,—thy God is with thee. Trust him still, hold on him still, he is a faithful, a gracious, a good God. Ah, how much sweeter it is to be in trouble and have the presence of God, than to be rolling in pleasure with a guilty conscience, you can testify. Sometimes, doubtless, thy heart is so full that thou art constrained, notwithstanding thy chains, to break forth into the voice of melody; and strange to tell, the praises of God are heard to resound, like as in the prison of Philippi two thousand years afterwards (Acts xvi. 25), where naught is wont to break upon the ear, save the voice of the swearer, the murmurer, and the blasphemer. Joseph! knowest thou not whose footsteps they are, retreating when thy prayer is done? Rememberest thou not those same footsteps you marked yesterday? Art thou unaware what impression thou art creating on the mind of the gaoler? Knowest thou not that he already looks upon thee as an injured, an innocent, a holy man? Ah! who is he that comes instead of thine ordinary attendant to-day? But he has not brought thee thy food! See, the tear is glistening

in his eye. What is he doing?—unfastening chains! Has Potiphar sent for thee? He discovered thine innocence? No. See, the leaves thy door open, and beckons thee to follow. Let us follow too, my brethren. Then the master sends to his prisoner other clothing; he seats him at his own table, and sets before him abundance of provision; and then, whilst the prisoner is eating, he learns, to his astonishment, that he has one sympathiser, one friend who is convinced of his innocence, and he learns, too, the mode of his confinement. He will do his utmost, he promises, to procure Joseph's release; meanwhile, anxious to mitigate his imprisonment as much as he can, he gives him the same food as in the prison which formerly he had held in the household of Potiphar: "The keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there was the doer of it." Now, Joseph, has God forsaken thee? Thou art assured he has not. It is he who has melted the heart of the stern and cruel gaoler. God, thy God, intends thee to look upon the prison as the germ of future deliverance, as an earnest that he has not forsaken thee, and never will. "The Lord says the sacred narrative, "was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the eyes of the keeper of the prison." And then the blessing of the Lord so attended his servant, that "the keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was in his hand; because the Lord was with him; and whatsoever he did the Lord made it to prosper" xxxix. 21—23).

Ah, what a good Lord he is! He will nev

our faith too severely. He will oft grant one gleam of sunshine even in the most cloudy day. Oh, how worthy he is of being loved and trusted! But, oh, we are prone to become fretful and impatient if he does not deliver us speedily. It is hard, my brethren, to preserve our confidence in God, when all things seem working together for our ruin; not because his promises are not rich enough, not because we have ever found him unfaithful to them, quite the reverse; but because our hearts are desperately wicked. Therefore it is he disciplines us, sending us affliction upon affliction, in order that we may be emptied of all conceit of ourselves, learning more of our own vileness, and that we may be more and more encouraged to believe in him, to love him, and to adore him, though he slay us, according as we learn more and more of his own glorious and blessed self.

Meanwhile time rolls on. The gaoler, it would appear, does intercede in Joseph's behalf with Potiphar, who, as captain of the royal guard, is the responsible governor of the prison, and which, in fact, formed part of his own establishment. And thus much he succeeds in obtaining for him, that his lenient treatment of the prisoner receives the sanction of his somewhat pacified master. That Potiphar, it should seem, could not forget how well things had gone on in his house whilst Joseph was his steward, nor avoid remarking the difference since he had put another in his place. These things *must*, to some extent, have touched his heart, and silently and continually pleaded for the innocence of his prisoner. Then he knew that the gaoler in his heart acquitted him of the crime; and he was continually hearing from him how quiet all things

were now in the prison since Joseph was allowed to act as his deputy. Hence we may conclude that Potiphar was oftentimes unconsciously angry with himself on account of his former rash and furious condemnation of his faithful servant. Never, my brethren, shall a man trust in the Lord in vain. Are we falsely accused? let us not be over anxious of justifying ourselves. Let us walk with God, careful only of pleasing him, and of enjoying his smile. Let us follow the example of our adorable Redeemer (1 Peter ii. 23); and let us embrace the advice of the Psalmist, when he says, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. And *he* shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day. Rest in the Lord, and *wait patiently* for him" (Psalm xxxvii. 5—7).

But now strange events are happening in the royal palace: events which, by the providence of God, shall become subservient to the release of Joseph, and to the entire fulfilment of his dreams. A conspiracy against the life of Pharaoh has been detected, in which two chief eunuchs are looked upon as implicated. If we may infer anything from their ordinary occupation, we may surmise that the plot was to take off the king by poison administered in his food. Whatever it was, it was discovered, and these individuals are committed to the custody of the captain of the guard, and to the very prison where Joseph is now an official, who is wisely entrusted by his master with their care. In him they find a kind keeper who pities their misfortunes, and can sympathise with their woes. He places them under no unnecessary restraint, he allows them *to be together*, and every other liberty consistent with

their safety. His kindness wins their confidence, they learn to regard him in the light of a friend. One morning, going in, as usual, to look after them and their welfare, he notices that they appear more than ordinarily down-hearted; and he, in a soothing manner, enquires the reason. He learns that on the preceding night they have each had a dream, which they believe to contain information as to their fate, but which, through lack of an interpreter, is wrapped in mystery. Probably they were wishful to be again in Pharaoh's court, though it were but for a single hour, in order that they might consult the magicians and wise men of Egypt, who, it should seem, had sometimes made shrewd guesses at truth. Alas, think they, as they cast their eyes around their prison walls, we are unable to seek their counsel! And here, my brethren, suffer me again to point out to you another proof that the Lord was with Joseph. If you attend to the current of the story, you will perceive that God gave these men their dreams purely for the sake of Joseph. If they had not had these dreams, Joseph had never been recommended to Pharaoh, and consequently, he would have died a prisoner, and his own dreams had proved untrue. But God gave them their dreams, and then put it into the heart of Joseph to interpret them, in order that, when afterwards he should give prophetic dreams to Pharaoh, that king should have a counsellor at hand who should inform him of a true Zaphnath-paaneah, a revealer of secrets. Thus was God taking care of Joseph, and working events together to issue in his exaltation, whilst of this working Joseph was at the time wholly unconscious. *Yes, God was with him, for he will never*

desert his own dear people, and inspired him to say to the captive dreamers, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you." This language may well startle us; surely at another time it must have startled even Joseph himself. "Look not," says he, "to the vain soothsayers of Pharaoh's court; God gave your dreams, and God will give the interpretation. His servant, his child am I; tell me, then, your dreams, and he, I am persuaded, will enable me to unfold their meaning. Yes, you shall learn by the exactness with which your fate shall be predicted, that Jehovah is the God of the world, and that he has indeed a people who serve him." This, my brethren, is not the language of a babe in grace; this jealousy for the honour of his God,—this strong, unwavering confidence in that God, demonstrate to me that the crucible had not been useless, and that the prison of Potiphar was the house of God. Hear now the prophetic dreams, and behold now the youthful, lowly judge.

"And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth, and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand." And Joseph said unto him, "This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast h

rtler." Not the slightest wavering, you observe, here; there is no hesitation; his reply to the butler is short, plain, and to the point. Yea, so confident is he that what he has uttered is the very truth of God, that he already looks upon him as a restored courtier, and elicits his assistance in the procuring of his own enlargement. But was not, some of you may ask, this very solicitation an evidence of his want of faith? Quite the reverse, my brethren, it only shews the harmonious manner in which grace enabled him to blend faith and practice. It was the promise of God, enshrined in his dreams, on which his soul confidently rested; and it was this very confidence which suggested to him the thought, Who knows, O Joseph, but that this is the very man destined to be instrumental in thy release, by acquainting his king with somewhat of thy previous history. So, too, God assured Paul, when on his voyage to Rome, that he should be brought safely there, and that for his sake all that were sailing with him should be safe too: yet this confidence, we know, so far from impairing his usefulness on that occasion, rendered him the most serviceable man in the ship; yea, when the sailors wanted to escape secretly from the ship, Paul discovered their intentions to the centurion, using these strong words: "Except these abide in the ship, ye *cannot* be saved;" because aware that God never predestines ends to be accomplished by us, without also determining the means which we shall use. If, my brethren, it were possible for an army to be assured confidently of victory ere the battle at all commenced, suppose ye that they could therefore ground their arms and refuse to encounter a single foe? Would not this assurance rather

nerve their every effort, embolden even the most and urge on the most irresolute? Now the brethren, are we assured by the pen of inspiration that come what will between us and our final salvation whether death, life, angels, principalities, or powers in all things we are, and ever shall be, more than conquerors through him that loved us (Rom. viii. 3). This it is that comforts us under every temptation; this enables us to survey the ranks of our enemies only without terror, but also with calm assurance; this keeps our hearts from trembling when we feel the cold hand of death upon us. Jesus said, "Thou shalt never perish, neither shall any man pluck thee from my hand" (John x. 28); and therefore we can say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me" (Psalm xxiii. 4).

But to return. How the delighted eunuch rejoiced upon every word of Joseph with breathless attention. How every syllable of his sentence drops down to the very bottom of a heart opened to the truth to receive it! What intense joy is pictured on his countenance! How differently do his prison walls appear! With what new dignity is the lowly position before him invested! He feels almost delivered. The three days he reckons over again and scarcely a single doubt disturbs his mind. Joseph, he will do anything for him; he feels that man in whom the Spirit of the holy God so evidently dwells, must be innocent, whatever crimes they are which are laid to his charge.

His fellow-prisoner, encouraged by all this, begins to relate also his dream. "Behold," says he,

three white baskets on my head: and in the uppermost basket was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head." It strikes one, upon comparing the two dreams together, how much they resemble each other in all but the outward drapery. Yet from this dream, so similar to the other, does Joseph proceed to read to this eunuch a doom altogether different from his fellow. We may imagine Joseph as standing in between his two fellow-prisoners; and whilst the one is elated with joy at what he has heard from his judge's lips, the other, breathless with impatience, feels his heart sink within him, as in slow and measured language the same judge proceeds: "The three baskets are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee." Oh, terrible sentence, which the poor wretch in vain strives to believe untrue. He fain would speak, but a sullen stupidity seizes him and he is silent. The third day soon arrives; the sentence is carried into execution; "the one is taken" to the court of Pharaoh and restored to his office, "the other left" to reap the condign punishment of his crimes, and is accordingly hung.

Oh, what a light had illuminated that prison! The intimate friend of the Most High God, it was plain, dwelt there. Underneath the ordinary raiment of a subaltern official had been beheld the celestial ermine in which all God's children are openly to appear at the last day (1 Cor. vi. 2). From the same omens the poor prisoner restored one eunuch to the court of Pharaoh, and consigned the other to terrible and inevitable destruction. Is there not something won-

derful in all this, my brethren? Yet has the scene been re-enacted on the Cross of Calvary splendour infinitely more illustrious, by a Person infinitely more exalted, and involving consequences those that were judged infinitely more tremendous because eternal! Listen!

I stated to you, at the beginning of this discourse, that all those who attain to eternal glory, have waded through an ocean of tribulation; that all of God must expect to be exempted from suffering whilst away from home. I now add to that statement the further Scripture testimony, that God, in sending many sons unto glory, was pleased to make even the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering (Heb. ii. 10). Not that the Son of God was perfect before; but he would not have been a perfect Redeemer had he not suffered. We needed his blood to cleanse from our sins, his sufferings to atone for our sins, as well as his righteousness to clothe and adorn us. And His *were* sufferings! Come with me, my brethren, and let us speed our way to Calvary's cruel tree, there behold the sublime, yet awful spectacle of the great and innocent Redeemer groaning under the weight of sin and woe which is there heaped upon him. Any one else it would have crushed; he alone endured and did, drain damnation dry. To take the wrath from his Father's hand, to quaff it, and leave *one single drop* at the bottom for any one of us; no angel could have done this, but Christ; therefore Christ is no angel, Christ is God. So great was that draught that even the manhood of our Saviour himself quailed when he took it. The *he offered* that memorable prayer, from which

gather that if there had been any other method possible of saving us by a personage less illustrious, that other method had been then discovered: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me" (Matt. xxvi. 39). "If there is any other way of saving my beloved people, than by my drinking this cup of woe, withdraw it from me, O my Father." Nor am I in the least, my brethren, ashamed of this prayer of my Saviour, any more than I am of his weariness when he sat upon the well of Jacob (John iv. 6). It teaches me that my adorable Redeemer was perfect man, as well as perfect God. Truly, martyrs and malefactors have each encountered death with courage. But, then, if martyrs have endured valiantly, it has been owing to the grace with which he has blessed them. And as for the courage of malefactors, it has been that of scorn and pride, which certainly found no place in the meek and lowly Son of God. And then, again, Jesus is purity and holiness itself, whilst yet he beheld, far more distinctly than any one else could do, that suffering and death are the wages of sin; which, although many pious sufferers may have understood intellectually, yet not in that true, and profound, and spiritual way in which the Lord Jesus viewed them. Once more, ever remember that he suffered as the head and representative of his people, and as such that he did most truly take their sins upon him. We have become, at length, so habituated to the word *imputation*, that we often fail to notice the Scripture truth, that our sins themselves, in point of guilt and defilement, as well as the punishment due to them, were all laid upon the Son of God. Realise this, and the mystery of his cry immediately vanishes. Thus Isaiah (liii. 6) says, "The

Lord hath laid upon him the *iniquity* of us all." Again, at verse 11, "He shall bear their *iniquities*." Again, verse 12, he himself "bare the *sin* of many." To which Scriptures you may add the testimony of St. Peter: "Who his own self bare our *sins* in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24). Else how could the justice of God have permitted that the holy, and harmless, and undefiled Redeemer should have suffered, except by viewing him as the guilty one, through the actual transfer of sin from us criminals to him the glorious Surety. Now this transfer was anciently prefigured by the imposition of hands on the head of the placular victim, which was regarded as so polluted by that imputation, that even the very persons whom duty led into contact with it afterwards, yea, and the priests themselves, were pronounced defiled, and were enjoined to wash their clothes, and, in some other cases, themselves as well, and to look upon themselves as unclean until the evening (Lev. xvi. 26—28; Num. xix. 7). Yet let me be distinctly understood. Jesus ever was, and ever must be, personally holy. The sins which, I say, he took, were his own not by commission but by transfer. Hence in Psalm lxix. 4, 5, he is represented as thus addressing his Father: "Then I will restore (אֲשׁוּב) what I took not away." That is, "When I become incarnate for my people, I will pay those debts of theirs which they owe to thy divine justice." These debts legally became his by virtue of that marriage union into which he was pleased to enter with his church. One fundamental law concerning marriage is, that all the husband has becomes the property of the wife, and all her debts become his. And hence St. Paul says, "Go

made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21). All his righteousness became ours, and all our sins became his.

Now, if you will maturely consider, beloved friends, the truth I have been inculcating, you will then better understand what it was that made the cross of Christ so bitter and so painful as it was. The pains which he underwent merely in his body were, doubtless, excruciating to the last degree. "For the hands and feet being the instruments of action and motion, are provided by nature with a much greater quantity of nerves than others have occasion for; and because all sensation is performed by the spirits contained in these nerves, it will follow that wherever they abound, the sense of pain must needs be more quick and tender. But though the pain of this kind of death was exceedingly sharp, yet as none of the vitals were immediately affected, the body continued thus stretched out and hanging upon the nails that fastened it to the cross, until *excess of anguish* had by degrees quite exhausted the spirit, and driven out the soul."* So that in the punishment of crucifixion, it was not the loss of blood or any such thing that caused the death of the sufferer, but the mere intensity of the pain. It was on this account that even the hard soldiers were wont to give to those whom they crucified a stupifying draught, but which Jesus refused to take. But, notwithstanding all this, this was not what rendered the sufferings of Christ so peculiarly severe. But it was undoubtedly all those filthy and abominable sins which his soul loathed to the last degree,—loathed

* Dean Stanhope.

far more intensely than creature can loathe any —which his church throughout all ages had mitted or should commit, and which were all round him, and laid upon him. In love church he bound that thing around his heart his soul detested, the only thing it did detest. was Adam's disobedience, Noah's drunkenness, incest, Abraham's prevarication, Isaac's lie, anger, Aaron's idolatry, David's adultery, murder, pride, Manasseh's abomination, Zacariah's un James's and John's ambition, Peter's ingratitude blasphemy, Paul's contention, and all thy sins, my sins, and thousands and millions more blackest die, all placed to the account, and laid the head of the dear, the immaculate, the holy of God. Is it any wonder, then, when we hear speaking by the mouth of David, "Innumerable have compassed me about, mine iniquities have hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore heart faileth me" (Psalm xl. 12)? That this Psalm longs to Christ St. Paul emphatically declares pare Psalm xl. 6—8, with Heb. x. 5—7). Was wonder, then, that the Father, who loved him,

L This was he who cast them out of heaven ; this he who was bent, they knew, on destroying their perished dominion on earth. Now they had him in their power ; nor will he conquer them with the arm of his omnipotence, but simply by his holiness and condescension in his heavenly Father. But now that Father whom he so loved, from whose bosom he had come, who had never before left him alone (John xvi. 32), whose face he had been wont to look up so conningly, yea, who had on two several occasions borne credible witness with how great satisfaction, with what perfect complacency, and with what extreme delight, beheld the Son of his love,—that very Father who, if possible, must have loved his Son more than we, as his obedience and dutifulness were so fully exhibited,—that very Father did now, in some sense, turn away from him, as he beheld the sins of the church actually transferred to and on the person of the Saviour. God must, he himself cannot help it, it is in his very nature, he must hate sin wherever and in whomsoever he sees it. And now he beheld his people's sins upon the spotless soul of Jesus, and, therefore, he turned away. Now was Jesus doubtless drinking the bitterest drops of the cup of wrath. What is heaven, my brethren, but the full enjoyment of the presence of God ? What is hell, but separation from the lovely, loving God of love ? And if creatures, human creatures, shall every one be brought presently, by experience, to understand either the one or the other of these, how much more must Jesus, who knew well, who felt so much more exquisitely than we do, that in God's favour there is life (Ps. xxx. 5),—how much more exquisitely, therefore, must he, I say,

have suffered, now that God hid his face from than any creature possibly can even in hell? Y curse consequent upon sin is separation from God. This was declared in the garden of Ede the day thou eatest thereof," said God, "tho surely die;" that is, thou shalt be separated fr who am life, and like the planet that has wandere its orbit, having lost its centripetal power, eve shall see thee further from me the Sun of Rig ness, the source of happiness. Hence, my br the longer a wicked man lives, the further and still does he wander on from God, death sterv his character, then his horrid retrogression b increasingly rapid, and in eternal flames the c endless ages that roll on will each witness th wretch remoter and yet remoter still from (heart, in soul, and in mind. Now, at the croe turned away from Christ; for Christ, although sin, not merely in its consequences but in its e as much as his Father did and could, had yet : to us so bound those sins around him, that no tion could be effected; nothing but his own could cover them.

Now let us put all this together: let us think mere bodily tortures which Jesus underwent as h alive upon the cruel cross; let us listen to th sive taunts and envenomed insults which Jesus r from his foes, and let them sink down into ou let us picture to ourselves the ghastly crew of surrounding him, each enraged to the last wreaking their utmost vengeance upon him, e cessantly tormenting his holy soul with horr *truly hellish* temptations; let us remember the

sins innumerable, which he hated with perfect hatred, were fastened inseparably upon him, and which, had he not been God, he never could have atoned for; that it was his divinity alone which kept him from being overwhelmed with them, but which sustained him, though submerged in their lowest depths, and by which he rose again, having made full atonement for them with his own rich heart's blood; and to all this let us add the solemn truth, that his own beloved Father himself smote him, himself bade his own justice arise and cast down the flames of heaven hitherto unsatisfied with millions of rams and lambs upon this divinely provided victim's soul; that that justice burnt on and on, consumed his vitals, parched his throat, dried up his strength, until it touched that victim's godhead, when, with a cry, "I am satisfied," it immediately expired: when, I say, we put all this together, we feel that Jesus bore a weight of woe, an accumulation of suffering, that would have sunk down a thousand archangels, yea, all creation, beneath its weight. Then, when he had borne all, suffered all, overcome all; when the Father had, fully satisfied, restored unto him the light of his countenance, then did an exulting shout escape from the dying Conqueror; a shout that rocked hell to its centre,—a shout that rent in twain and crumbled into air the adamantine gates of heaven, "It is finished," burst from his triumphant lips; "My Father's law is honoured, his justice is satisfied, the work entrusted to me is finished, my people are safe, are free, are mine, now and for ever."

Oh, my brethren, what glory streamed forth from the Cross of Christ. If ever there was a God in the

universe, that God was manifested, was suspended on the Cross of Calvary. In the behaviour, in the conduct of the glorious Personage who hung there, there was so much resemblance to all that the Scripture says of the character of God, that I feel I need no other illustration of that crucified One was God, than that which his deeds afford. That he did possess great power over Satan, all his previous life testified. Once having driven out two thousand devils out of one man, they had gathered round him, beseeching him, solitary and unarmed, that he would not destroy them, and in giving permission to enter into some swine. Yet, ere he was far from using it, he lets them assault him ; and, in so doing, please, he permits the powers of darkness to have their hour ; eagerly they engage with him, and in the engagement annihilate their own power for ever, and truly bruise his heel, but in that very bruising they crush their own heads. Then was beheld a far more striking illustration of that saying, "*Quos Deus vult prius dementat*,"* than ever the drowning hosts of Egyptians could possibly exhibit. Then, too, he surrenders himself over to the will of his adversaries ; he let them gratify their virulent malice ; they nailed him to the cross, they slew him, and in that slaying, and by that crucifixion, he satisfied their inveterate hatred, melted their stony hearts and brought them suppliant to his feet. Then he goes under the curse instead of his church, and sends Justice to wreak and spend its utmost vengeance on his devoted head. Terrible, then, were the agonies of the Sufferer for a short season. But justice has its limits beyond which it were unjust to go. Hence, w

* That is, "Those whom God wishes to destroy he first drives

and silently endured all for the space of three hours, as he pleaded with his Father on the score of that Justice. "My God, my God," said he, "why hast thou forsaken me?" Thus he went on wrestling with his Father in the language of the first twenty verses of the twenty-second Psalm, and then God answered him. "Thou hast heard me," he triumphantly exclaimed; and so the remainder of the Psalm is the language of exulting joy. And, my brethren, when God heard him, and restored unto him the light of his countenance, so that Christ's sun went down without a single cloud before it, oh, what convincing proof do I see therein, that the Person who could so speedily drain all the wrath of God, under which the church of God had otherwise suffered to all eternity, that that Person who could lead offended Justice to kiss Mercy, and Righteousness Peace (Psalm lxxxv. 10),—that that Person must indeed be glorious, divine. Then did he let the monster death try its strength with him; it stung him, but it left its sting in him—it stung itself to death. Yes, truly, in all this, my brethren, Christ appeared more like God, and his glory streamed forth far more magnificently, than if he had annihilated this sinful world and created another in its stead. He conquered Satan, where Satan had thought to have conquered him.

One thing more, and I have done. Christ's enemies, we have seen, were very determined ones. Nothing that imagination could invent was spared, that could add to the indignity and cruelty of his sufferings. Their consciences told them how perfectly holy had been his life, and they were afraid lest after his death he should be regarded as a martyr. This they deter-

mine to do their utmost to prevent. They hit him with being a malefactor; that charge shall not, be forgotten. It shall be written of blood. Hence, to fulfil prophecy, he is with transgressors (Isaiah liii. 12). The sinning of these men hits upon an ingenious. When Barabbas, a captain of a Zealot band, was captured, some of his gang were prisoners. Two of these men, apparently on trial, they crucify; and they crucify them Jesus, in order that he, too, may appear another. They mean the three crosses to people, "Behold, now are there *three* male *three* troublemakers of Jerusalem less, than before." In order perfectly to bury him, among them, they place his cross in the theirs on the right and left hand. Oh, throw the reins to their own hearts' lusts, let them approximate to the character of the de Here now they had all his malice, and, so directed against the Son of God, all its Again does Jesus make the wrath of man him. Again does he make man's wildest subserve his own glory. Unwillingly shall monstrous deeds be made the platform for of that glory. They meant to say, "See, king, and these are his subjects, and this is ment they deserve!" And Jesus in act reply I am the KING, and this is what my subjects serve, and this is what, through taking the deserve." They meant it to be as another in his degradation: Jesus makes it the towards his exaltation. They intended to

make his cross odious: Jesus hereby makes it the more illustrious; yea, he turns his cross into a throne of judgment. From the profoundest gloom into which he pierced in love to his church, he makes a dazzling and most resplendent ray of his divine glory to escape. In the persons of these two robbers, and whilst he was yet hanging upon the cross, he gives a solemn, a sublime rehearsal of the processes and results of that day, when, having sat down on the great white throne, and all the inhabitants of the world being gathered around him, he shall separate the one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. Here were two thieves as equally criminal in the eyes of God and man as it is possible to imagine. They had been made prisoners together whilst engaged in the same insurrection. They had each suddenly been led to crucifixion. When they were first crucified they had each derided Jesus and his claims (Matt. xxvii. 44; Mark xv. 32). And so, doubtless, they would each have persisted in doing,—they had each died in their sins, had not He, whose ways are not as our ways, made a difference between them as wide as the gulf that separates heaven from hell, as abiding as eternity itself can be. Why did one robber cease from his blasphemies and his railings, and the other continue them? Well may we adopt St. Paul's words, "Who made him to differ from the other? and what had he that he did not receive"? (1 Cor. iv. 7.) What reft in twain his hard blaspheming heart, and caused the cry to escape therefrom, "Lord, remember me"? What changed his tone in so remarkable a manner from, "Save thyself and us," to this humble supplication for mercy? Why was not the other robber, only as bad

as his fellow,—why was not he brought to recognise his crucified Lord as well,—as well to implore, “Lord, remember me”? If *one* is to be saved, *why this one*, and not the *other*? Ah, here I learn another illustration of that truth so repeatedly inculcated in Scripture, that Jesus Christ is a sovereign God, and will dispense his favours to whomsoever he pleases. If the hearts of kings are in his hands, and he can turn them which way he will, at least equally so, were the hearts of these robbers (Prov. xxi. 1). This was what God had promised Christ ere he had begun his mission at all: “*Thy people*,” says his Father to him, “*thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*” (Psalm cx. 3). Herein it is, my brethren, the new covenant differs from the one in Eden, in that it deals in nothing but God’s *wills* and *shalls* (see Heb. viii. 7—13). Thus runs the new covenant, “*I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people*,” &c. Herein, then, my brethren taught of God, you see the cause of the difference made between the one robber and the other. No other scriptural answer can be given, however much unconverted man may not like to hear it. He took one, because he was a sovereign God, able to do what he liked; and he left the other for the same reason. One he took with him home to paradise, and the other he left in his sins. And, oh, my brethren, how rapid was the work of grace in that robber whom he had made willing! See the holy and determined boldness with which he defends Jesus against the revilers at his feet and his other fellow-sufferer. What adoring love must it have been that thus impelled him to bear witness for Jesus.

Mark how profound, too, is his conviction of sin. He acknowledges that he is reaping the condign punishment of his transgressions; and I feel, if with the same grace in his heart it had been possible for him to have gone to hell, his language had been still the same: "We, indeed, justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds." Behold, too, the strength of his faith: "Lord," says he. Where did he learn that, my brethren? certainly not in the school of nature. Only to think that this poor, this rich man, actually recognised in the person that was crucified next to him, who was enduring the same pains, who was suffering at least the same indignities, that he was enabled to behold in this fellow-sufferer of his, his Lord, his Saviour, his heavenly King; that he could look forward to the day when that very person should appear again as the great and universal King of heaven, yea, and to direct his prayer to that man! Or look once more at his humility. How little he asks for; the very least possible! He feels himself to be so very unworthy, that he dares but to say, "Lord, remember me; in that great day of thine think upon me and my poor humble name." I feel, my brethren, that this man's humility was far greater than was that woman's who washed his feet with her tears; and that his faith was, indeed and indeed, stronger than Peter's was, when he made that noble exclamation, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" For now everything outward was completely against his seeing any form or comeliness in Jesus; everything to the eye of sense concurred in saying, "He is a worm, and no man; a reproach of men and despised of the people." But it was THEN, when Jesus appeared so ordinary a person, *it was then* when he was enabled to

pray that sublime prayer: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Oh, what a grand exhibition of the freeness of the grace of God. Jesus picked a sinner up, ready to drop into the very bottom of hell, and took him home with him to paradise. Oh, my brethren, what cannot grace do after this!* How ought it not to encourage us, who feel the plague of our own hearts, and who deplore how rebellious we are prone to be by nature, to learn and to remember from this vivid specimen, that grace is almighty and free. Free grace! Oh, this *is* a sweet sound to a troubled conscience, to a conscience upon which the Holy Ghost is working! And then, when the word of pardon comes, flowing from the wounds, and blood, and lips of a precious crucified Christ—ah! you must feel it like this dying thief did. But nothing of this did the enemies of Christ intend. BUT GOD DID. Jesus determined to have a memorial eternally in heaven of his hidden power even when all the angels of darkness, and the terrors of divine wrath seemed for a time to have vanquished him. "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ."

Oh, what shame to Satan to lose a prey when so

* How inconsiderate, to say the least, must those men be who so misinterpret John xvii. 12, as to say, that Christ lost a soul whom he desired to keep! What! he that could rescue a great robber like him that was crucified with him, and a terrible blasphemer too, not able to rescue a petty pilferer! How absurd! And if hundreds of passages of Scripture which state that those whom the Father has given to Christ shall not perish, and that none can pluck them from Christ's hand,—if these passages, I say, have any meaning in them, then how unscriptural is those men's dogma. And look at this their favourite text. It does not encourage their notion. It says, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost." As for the Son of Perdition, he is lost, for two very good reasons; one is, that he is not a *sheep*, but the *Son of Perdition*, and, secondly, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. That Jesus does not intend to make any exception is *plain* from the next chapter (John xviii. 9), where the apostle quotes these words of Christ without any limitation.

near to its full possession! Oh, what glory to Jesus to rescue one of his poor sheep when the roaring lion had already made sure of it! To embrace a sinner in the arms of his mercy, even when his own hands were nailed to the tree! To give from the very cross itself a specimen of the way in which, and of the ease with which, he saves sinners! To make that the way of manifesting the excess of his love, and the surpassing greatness of his glory, which his foes had intended for his severest disgrace. Methinks, O Satan, if Christ were to be crucified again, which, thank God, he is not, thou wouldst not instigate thy children again to crucify two robbers with him. Methinks, of all the monuments of mercy that are privileged to stand round the throne of love, none shall bring greater glory to Christ,—none shall more shew the perfection of his attributes,—none ought more to encourage us, even the worst, to trust fully in him,—none shall pour greater shame on those who, through unbelief, are afraid to rest upon Christ's precious blood,—than this poor, this rich, this sinful, this pardoned, this saved robber.

"Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.

"Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

"When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man, Thou didst not abhor the virgin's womb.

"When Thou didst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

"Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.

"We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge.

"We, therefore, pray Thee, help Thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood!"



VII.

THE GREAT DELIVERER.

"Until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him. The king sent and loosed him, even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: to bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his senators wisdom."—Psalm cv. 19—22.

Among many arguments, my beloved brethren, which might be adduced, in proof of the doctrine that there shall be a judgment-day, one very powerful with me is the fact which we may continually behold with our eyes, that the wicked are often seen to prosper, whilst the righteous are trodden down, and counted as the off-scouring of all things. Is there a God? We feel there is. Is he righteous? We also feel he is. Then how are we to account for this apparently maladministration of his? In no other way is it at all possible than by the Scripture declaration, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his (Christ's) voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v. 28, 29). This is the conclusion to which every rational being who shall admit the premises I have stated, and which few can have the hardi-

hood to deny, must arrive; namely, that there must be some time or other yet future when the tables shall be turned once and for ever. To this important time Malachi (iii. 13—18) points those persons whom he introduces as saying, "It is vain to serve God. . . . And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up." He reminds such that the Lord has a book in which their names are enrolled who fear and serve him, who shall be the Lord's in *that day* when he makes up his jewels. "Then," the prophet adds, shall "him that serveth God" be clearly discerned, and easily distinguished from "him that serveth him not;" for "the proud," continues he in the fourth chapter, shall be burnt up "root and branch;" whilst to those that fear the Lord, "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise;" that is to say, to such *Jesus* will appear a second time, to receive them to himself and to his bosom for ever (Psalm xlix. 14; Heb. ix. 28; 2 Thess. i. 6—10).

But, you may ask, does not God in this present dispensation ever appear for the discomfiture and destruction of the wicked, and for the deliverance and salvation of those that trust in him? He does, my brethren. Sometimes he appears, but not always. If he *invariably* shewed himself the avenger of sin and the defender of his people in the present dispensation, what would be the use of a day of judgment? If he *never* did, would not the sinner wax too bold, and say, "Tush! God shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard"? and would not the righteous sometimes become altogether dispirited and desponding? But now his word declares, "*Some* men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men

they follow after. Likewise, also, the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid" (1 Tim. v. 24, 25). Of the former, Uzziah is an instance (2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21); of the latter, Joseph. After he had been well disciplined by the God that loved him,—after his faith had been severely tried in the furnace of affliction for thirteen years,—after his faith had brought forth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope,—after that he had learnt to rest and wait on the Lord, when the Lord's own time had fully come,—then was he delivered. Two years have now elapsed since he prophesied of the butler's restoration to his office, and a terrible two years they were to him. The felt consciousness of that man's ingratitude,—the being cut off from all hope of help from the creature,—the unrelenting cruelty of Potiphar,—the thoughts of home and of his father's weal,—the constant assaults of unbelief,—the fierce temptations of Satan to curse God and die,—all these, we may well imagine, would at times wellnigh overwhelm his spirit, and tend to shake his confidence in God. But, then, the Lord was with him, and shewed him mercy, and gave him strength equal to his day, and cheered him with his presence, and comforted him with his love. "Truly," would Joseph sometimes argue with himself, "truly I am under condemnation on the charge of adultery and of base ingratitude," and then a sigh would escape him; "but then, God, thou knowest my innocence, and thou wilt deliver me. Else, why didst thou thyself remove me from the dock of the felon, and place me in the seat of the judge. Thou must have had some design or other in that, O my God,

years yet; when, unexpectedly, as he is in his usual routine of duty, a messenger arrives in great haste from the court of Pharaoh, with summons for Joseph promptly to attend upon his master. He, when he hears the messenger's tale, a gleam of light darts into his soul, and perceives that God is still at work for him. A remembrance that Pharaoh is destined to be his friend to him. How ashamed of himself does he feel at this moment, when he casts the eye of faith back and calls to mind all his unbelieving thoughts; he wishes he had fully and perfectly trusted in dear, good God. But he has little time for reflection, the messenger is urgent upon him. So he divests himself of the remaining badges of his former life; *never more to resume them*; his beard, which had grown through a degree of desponding carelessness, he removes; arrays himself in suitable apparel, and assays to follow his

he proceeds, attended by his guide, through street after street, until he arrives at the palace. There he is well eyed by the obsequious attendants, for his fame has gone before him. The dreams of Pharaoh, his earnest desire to ascertain their meaning, and the utter confusion of the magi and wise men, are in every one's mouth. Many also among themselves have been attempting in their own minds to unravel them, for they feel that some rich reward will accrue to the man that can; but none of them are able to make anything of them. The butler's story is also current, and curiosity is on tip-toe to see the man in whom dwells, it is reported, the Spirit of the great God.

And now he is ushered into the presence-chamber. There sits the monarch on his throne evidently in restless anxiety; his courtiers stand in groups behind him. For a moment his eye encounters that of the captain of the guard, who instantly changes colour and hangs down his head. All eyes are now intent upon him. Ceremony is dispensed with. Joseph is placed in front of the throne, when the king abruptly accosts him thus, "I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it." As Pharaoh utters these words, he casts his eye searchingly at Joseph, to see if he betrays the slightest indecision. But he finds none; the youth modestly and meekly replies, "It is not in *me*; *God* shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." His emphatic manner, his earnest jealousy for the honour of his God, arouse and encourage Pharaoh. He proceeds. "In my dream," says he, "behold, I stood upon the bank of the river: and, behold, there came up out of the

river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow: and, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: and the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good: and, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them: and the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me." Joseph listens to the king without betraying the slightest perturbation. He is wont to walk with God, and now the eye of his faith is towards him. That God does not forsake him in the hour of his need; he reveals to him the interpretation. With a grateful prostration of soul at the footstool of his heavenly Father, he thus addresses the king: "The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do." Mark how calm and collected he is; mark how he ascribes all to the Lord. He continues, "The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears, blasted with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: what God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh. Behold *there come seven years of great plenty throughout*

all the land of Egypt: and there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land; and the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." One cannot help observing in this modest and respectful reply of Joseph, the pertinacity with which, before a heathen monarch and idolatrous courtiers who hold his fate in their hands, he solemnly ascribes all dominion and all power to the Lord, and takes not the slightest notice of Egypt's many gods. There is no reserve, no shrinking from the truth: his words are as pointed as if all his audience revered the God of heaven and earth only. The heart of each testifies that Joseph is a servant of the living God. Meanwhile the courtiers gaze at him, and then at one another. The easy and devout manner in which he opens up the dreams amazes them. They feel that he is as far beyond the most learned of the Egyptian magi, as in after times the divine enlightenment of Daniel favourably contrasted with the wisdom of Babel's soothsayers. And then, too, the important, the tremendous revelations which he is enunciating petrify them. They could not speak, if they attempted, so do they hang on his every word. As for the king, not an action, not a look, not a syllable, of Joseph's escapes him. He feels, moreover, perfectly confident that the prisoner is unfolding the fate of his kingdom for twice seven years, and that in these impending times the welfare of succeeding ages will be intimately interested. Prisoner,

do I say?—Pharaoh is fully resolved that Joseph shall no more return to prison, though what to do with him he is for the moment uncertain. But herein God teaches him. He inspires Joseph to follow up the interpretation with some sage and weighty advice. The humble adviser himself innocently intends it in kindness for Pharaoh. He is wholly unconscious that those words determine his own lot. In the volunteering of his counsel I believe him to have been wholly disinterested. He is intent only on being of service to Pharaoh, and yet he thereby promotes vastly his own aggrandizement. Observing the profound attention with which he is listened to by all, he is emboldened to continue thus: "Now, therefore, let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store for the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine." This advice the sagacious Pharaoh prudently accepts, and in a manner that astounds Joseph. The king feels that as he had just before appeared as the faithful servant and intimate friend of his God, so now he has given ample proofs of his loyalty, prudence, skill, and wisdom. Whether he is aware of the crime with which Joseph is charged I cannot say, certain it is, he is convinced of his innocence, and proceeds publicly to prove it. In his official capacity as

the highest officer in the realm, he proceeds to reverse the sentence of Potiphar. He *more* than declares his innocence—much more; he not only releases him from prison, he seats him on the vice-regal throne. Potiphar's servant is to become Potiphar's master. A more emphatic declaration could not be given. Pharaoh turns to his courtiers, Potiphar doubtless being among them, and determining to act out Joseph's counsel to a degree, says, "Can we find such an one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" Then do all, either by their silence or in express words, unanimously assent to the judgment of Pharaoh. Then the king, turning to Joseph, solemnly pronounces his decision—a decision to which, had Jacob's other children been present, they might well have listened, and in which they might well have exulted, as they also therein were immediately concerned. "Forasmuch," says the monarch, "forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: *thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.*" The king seems to know no words in which he may adequately declare his approbation. Twice more does he repeat his words (Gen. xli. 41 and 44), and the second time with a solemn oath (verse 44), as if labouring to express the satisfaction with which he regards Joseph. Then, suiting the action to the word, he beckons him up the steps of his throne; takes the ring from his own hand and places it on Joseph's, to denote his favour and the power which he has conferred upon him; over him he throws a robe of fine linen, and puts a gold chain around his neck, investing him thereby with the

insignia of prime minister of Egypt. My brethren I pause to ask you in what manner could Joseph have been more honourably acquitted, and the satisfaction of the king more emphatically declared, than what thus Jehovah's time of his servant's deliverance has come, and his word* had tried him? I pause, I say, just merely to ask you these questions, intending what next we meet, if it please God, more fully to dwell on the exaltation of Joseph: and now proceed to point out to you a greater Deliverer indeed than Pharaoh ever was, and a greater deliverance than Joseph ever experienced,—an illustration of innocence far sublimer, a declaration of approval infinitely more transcendent, and one, too, in which you yourselves are eternally interested.

* Hic docet Propheta, quamvis secundum carnis sensum nimis cunctis Deus, summam moderationem tenere, ut opportune tandem compleat quod decrevit. *Verbum* hoc loco haud dubie significat non doctrinam sed decretum celeste. Quanquam autem relativum *ejus* tam de ipso Deo quam de Joseph potest intelligi: hoc tamen secundum, mihi magis placet, donec scilicet patefieret exitus Joseph, qui in Dei consilio latebat. Tenendum semper: Prophetam revocare hominum mentes a profana illa imaginatione, quod fortuna temerè verset res humanas. Quum enim nihil Ecclesiæ salute minus confusum fuerit quamdiu habitus est Joseph pro damnato, Propheta nos sursum attollit, et jubet reputare occultum verbum, cujus nondum opportuna vel matura erat manifestatio. Eodem modo interpretor quod sequitur *Sermo Dei examinavit eum*. Nam de vaticinio exponere, ut faciunt multi videtur nimis argutum. Quousque vero apparuit lætior eventus, quem Deus occultum et suspensum diu tenuit, serio examinata fuit patientia Joseph. quod profani homines qui non agnoscunt Deum rebus humanis præfatum appellant, Propheta magis proprio nomine insignit, dicens *sermo esse Dei, et cujusque verbum*. Nec displicet quod Galli suâ lingua vocant *destinée*. Stoici quum de fato disputant, vel potius balbutiunt, non minus spinosis anfractibus se involvunt, et rem ipsam, sed verum principium: quod complexum causarum fingentes, eripiunt Deo mundi gubernacula. Implet hoc figmentum est, causas inter se perplexas nectere, quibus alligatus ipse Deus. Fidem ergo nostram ad arcanum Dei consilium ascendere oportet quo libere omnia in suum finem dirigit. Interea docet etiam hic locus, ut plorum afflictionibus Divinitus esse præfixum donec probè examinati fuerint

Calvin's Commentary on Psalm 105.

When, my brethren, the apostle declares (Acts xx. 28) that the blood of God himself was shed for his church, I feel that, however we may explain this statement, there is still involved much important and sublime truth. Truly God, as God, has no blood; truly, too, God, as God, cannot die; yet as true it is that Christ is the Man-God and the God-Man, and that he, as *such*, did shed his blood and did die. God, as God, cannot suffer; and yet that Christ, who did suffer, is God, ten thousand Scriptures emphatically testify. It was in order that he might be enabled to bleed, and suffer, and die, that the second Person of the adorable Trinity, the Son of God, took the human nature and joined it with his own (Heb. ii. 9—17). In Christ two natures co-exist, neither one lost in the other. On the one hand his Godhead was not *changed* into Manhood, nor on the other hand was his Manhood absorbed or lost in the immensity of his Godhead. Each nature is kept in him perfectly inviolate, and yet so mysteriously joined together, that as the body and soul are one man, so God and man are *one* Christ. If, then, he who was hung upon the tree had been God only, he had been incapable of suffering; if man only, his sufferings in our behalf had been of no value, nor could he have endured one-thousandth part he did. He bore, as we have seen, the curse of sin so dire, and a weight of woe so accumulated, as would have sunk down into endless,* hopeless torment all heaven's

* We should ever remember that sin is an *infinite* offence, being committed against an *infinite* Being. Crime always increases in proportion to the dignity of the person against whom it is committed. A soldier striking one of his comrades, does, in the eyes of the law, commit a less crime than he who should strike his commanding officer; and he a far less one, than he who should strike the *sovereign*. This is that which invests sin with its tremen-

loftiest and mightiest archangels. That he who suffered for us was man, his bitter cries did illustrate that he was God, his glorious victory did prove. From the profoundest depths of his humiliating striking rays of his omnipotent and divine power burst forth. When he took his church's sins upon himself, he sunk for a time beneath their load. In Father's face he could not see. For three hours at least, vast and incomprehensibly great was the measure of his sufferings. But it was impossible for him to be overwhelmed. Hence, in his greatness, and by his holiness, he wrestled with his Father and was *heard*. As our Husband, our Brother, our Head, he emerged from those depths, and, with his church joined to him, he again had restored to him the light of his Father's countenance. Inasmuch as we sinners were united to him, he was bowed down beneath our woes; inasmuch as he is united to us, we are more than conquerors through his holiness, his greatness, his divinity, which are all ours. Had Christ finally succumbed in this great struggle, we had been undone for ever, and he had gone to heaven again without his church, his bride, his people. It is most important, my brethren, for your peace, your faith, your joy, that you should ever remember that Christ and you are indissolubly *one* (Eph. v. 23—33); that he has from everlasting married you; that it was as your Husband he su-

dous character;—it is committed against *God*. Hence it is that none but God himself could atone for sin. Hence it is that the sufferings of the damned will be eternal. They will ever be paying, never will they have peace. Hence it is that God is so much more glorified in the sinners that are saved by Christ, than in those that are lost; because the sins of the saved have been *fully* suffered and atoned for, whilst the sufferings of the lost, being only creature-sufferings, can never atone for sin committed against the *great Creator*.

beneath your sins; that it was as your Husband, your elder Brother, your Representative, he washed away those sins in his blood, and rose again into his Father's favour. Do, also, remember that this triumph was achieved at the Cross. Before Christ died his Father's countenance was restored to him. Christ died the Victor; he had for ever overwhelmed our sins, and not they him. Hence we find that his last words were, "Father,"—you see God is present with him again,—“Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.” This is the language of calm confidence; his soul is no longer in darkness. Now did he willingly yield up his life; no one took it from him, he laid it down of himself. He would conquer our last enemy,—he would burst the gates of the grave,—he would by death overcome death. Meanwhile, however, his foes still imagined they had triumphed, and that the cause of Jesus was annihilated. Two of his disciples, Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, having, by the permission of Pilate, taken the body of Jesus from the cross, and laid it in a new tomb, the Pharisees cause a ponderous stone to be rolled over the mouth of the sepulchre, and station a guard of Roman soldiers around, in order to keep their prisoner safe and secure. Although he is dead, they affect to dread him. A comparison which he had made of himself with Jonah disturbs them, and therefore do they take these extraordinary precautions. Having sealed the stone, and given the guard their charge, these wretched men depart, abandoning themselves to self-congratulations. Ah! say they to themselves, that deceiver (such is the word their lips use, but which their consciences reject) will no more give

us trouble, will no more expose our sins. Little do they think that all these precautions of theirs shall but subserve his glory whom they pretend to despise. For, my brethren, if his FRIENDS had done these things, it might have been suspected that there was some complicity and underhand work in the matter, and that they did all this in order to *pretend* that he was dead. But now he was adjudged to be dead by his veriest foes; Pilate himself was satisfied that such was the case; they had their own way about his burial; he was buried alone; the place of his sepulchre was made sure, *expressly to prevent his being removed*; and they placed around a band of soldiers, large enough, even in their own judgment, to prevent his being taken away by force or fraud. As the stone made the sepulchre sure, and as the seal of the state—which it was death for any person to meddle with—made the stone sure, so the Roman band made all sure. Then, further, permit me to remind you, that these occurrences happened when the moon was at the full, and when the city, on occasion of the feast of passover, was crowded with two millions of Jews from all places, and when, therefore, persons would be continually passing and re-passing during the whole night. This single fact alone would be amply sufficient to have rendered it impossible, even under the most *favourable* circumstances, for his disciples to steal him away. And as for those disciples, their thoughts lay in quite another direction. So far are they from thinking of purloining the corpse of their Master, in order to propagate an untruth about his resurrection, that they themselves are in utter consternation, imagining that *his cause* is lost. Their hopes appear to them to be

dashed to the ground. Their language is, "We trusted it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." The thoughts of their hearts during the time that Christ was dead, had been prophetically delivered in the eighty-ninth Psalm, which I venture to request you will now read quite through. Although that Sabbath-day which succeeded the crucifixion was a "high" day to the other Jews, it was doubtless a very mournful one to these bereaved men. It is spent in expostulating with God. You can almost hear them uttering their moans, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne. . . . Thou saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty, . . . my covenant shall stand fast with Him; . . . but thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine Anointed. Thou hast made void the covenant of thy Servant, thou hast profaned His crown by casting it to the ground" (Psalm lxxxix. 14, 19, 38, 39). It is useless to attempt to console them; they will not hear of it. Jesus they loved, they adored. They had been so wont to hang upon his lips with breathless attention, so fond of his sweet and cheering voice! His look had ever conveyed untold affection for them; and then, too, he had done such great things for them. He had taught them how rightly to serve the everlasting Father; he had put such ineffable peace into their hearts as previously they had been entire strangers to; he had been their Friend in the truest sense of the word upon every occasion;—and He, alas, ruthless hands had seized him, torn him from them, crucified him! Yea, they themselves, in the hour of danger, had had the cowardice to forsake him and flee! Not that they feared that *he had not forgiven them*; oh, no, they

knew much better.* But this consciousness that he was so willing to forgive, yea, and that he had then immediately and lovingly forgiven them, this only served to deepen their sorrow, and to cause their tears to flow the faster. Broken was the rest which they got that night. When in the garden with him, two nights previously, they had slept, although he had asked them to pray with him. Then, overcome with sorrow and exhaustion, they had allowed Jesus to suffer without offering the slightest sympathy (Luke xxii. 45). Then, on the succeeding night, surely they could not sleep after the tremendous events of that day. Now, therefore, what with watching and what with poignant grief, they slumber, they sleep. Surely in their dreams Jesus is again with them, conversing affectionately with them as usual. And, oh, ever as they awake from their disturbed slumbers, to perceive that Jesus is *not* with them, that it was but a dream, how terrible to realise, how acutely do they feel the deprivation. The women, however, as is usually the case in the hour of real and exceeding trouble, are not so easily overwhelmed. Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Salome, and Mary the mother of James, are busily engaged in preparing spices and ointments with which to embalm his dear and sacred body. They pause not in their work for anything; for every moment that detains them from the corpse of Jesus appears a century. Meanwhile, how fares it in the garden? There the ever watchful Roman legionaries

* One proof of this assertion is found in the fact that Peter, although the other disciples must have been well acquainted with his terrible fall, does not appear to have been shunned at all by his companions. On the contrary, we find that Peter and John go together to the tomb on the morning of the resurrection.

are pacing to and fro around the tomb which contains the body of the sleeping Hero. Watchers, other than these iron Romans, are also there; the garden is as Paradise; cherubim and seraphim, intelligence and love, are there; and in sweet mellifluous strains,—strains sweeter far than were ever heard in that blest place where the note of praise from angelic lips is continually sounding,—millions of heavenly voices chant the anthem of praise for the lead Redeemer; the solemn words of inspiration float upon the still morning air, “Thou wilt not leave his soul in hell, nor wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” But now the first tinge of morning light announces the approach of the great third day. Jehovah remembers his word, and all heaven descends to worship their victorious King, with whom death is vainly striving, anxious to retain possession of his illusory Captive. Suddenly the word of the Almighty penetrates the tomb: “My Son, come forth,” is pronounced over the corpse of the Crucified; a seraph rolls away the great stone from the door of the sepulchre, and forth comes the Man of Sorrows arrayed in more than Eden majesty; his head and his hairs are white like wool, as white as snow; his eyes are as a flame of fire; his feet like unto fine brass; in his right hand are seven stars, and in his left are grasped the keys of hell and of death. In his countenance no trace of love or suffering is now discernible; light, inufferable, beyond the brightness of the sun, streams herefrom; the happy spirits drop down at his feet adoring, never did their Lord appear before so glorious; he terrified soldiers, representing the world’s opposition, *fall down as dead* before him; hell lies conquered

at his feet. Nature, too, seems desirous of paying homage to her risen Lord, and to rejoice upon this supremely festive occasion: the sun, which is now issuing from the portals of the sky, sheds forth its myriads of golden rays without a single intervening cloud; the feathered songsters chirp more merrily among the trees; the flowers around seem to have put on their gayest attire; every blade of grass is eloquent with mute praise; yea, all creation is intent on swelling the hymn of triumph on this the coronation festival of the King of Glory. An angel proclaims to a listening universe in exulting tones, "The Lord is risen;" and patriarchs, and prophets, and saints triumphant, echo back the joyful words, "The Lord is risen indeed:" whilst to the ear of faith of saints on earth, may be distinctly heard the voice of the eternal Father, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased; blessed are all ye that put your trust in him."

But who is that woman standing there, her face suffused with tears, her countenance expressive of deep anxiety, and herself apparently angry at creation appearing so joyous? It is Mary Magdalene. She had arrived with her companions at the tomb early in the morning, in order to pay the last tribute of devout love to their gracious Lord; to their dismay they had found it empty; they had run with trepidation to the apostles to inform them of the fact; she had followed Peter and John back again; they had come and seen, and returned, but they could not induce her to return with them. She stood without at the sepulchre, weeping. As then she wept, she looked into the sepulchre. Doubtless she had looked into it scores of times previously, but she hoped against hope that she

had not before searched carefully,—that her tears had prevented her from seeing clearly; and so she cast her eyes wistfully again into the sepulchre, as one seeking earnestly for anything would let his eyes fall often upon the same spot. And this time she sees “two angels in white, sitting, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.” What the subject of their meditation was, it would not be difficult to imagine. They do not honour the place; the place honours them. They have remained behind the rest of their comrades, in obedience to the command of their Lord, in order to enable her to discern what has happened. As for her, there is not the slightest account of her being terrified at such a vision. At any other time she might have been, but not under her present circumstances. Her excitement and anxiety were so absorbing as to check fear. Neither was she charmed at their august appearance. At another time she might have been, but not now. Her tears flowed as fast as ever; she regards them not. “And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?” That “why” of theirs might have allayed her grief, had she then been capable of reasoning calmly. It implied there was *no cause* for her grief,—it implied that Jesus was risen. But that she does not understand. Hence she replies, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.” She still calls Jesus her Lord, as though some glimmer of the resurrection were latent in her mind. True, she was unconscious of its presence, but her language and her behaviour prove that such a thought did really lurk within her breast. Had you bluntly put the question to her, as she turned away from the

angels, and said, "Mary, is your Lord risen?" doubtless she would have answered, "No, he is not." But she would have understood her own feelings much better, had you said to her, "Mary, that Saviour who cast seven devils out of you,—who poured peace, and pardon, and joy, into your wounded soul,—that Saviour, you will never see again,—that gracious and tender heart is now the food of worms." Methinks she would have responded, with all the energy imaginable, "Impossible,—he is the Lord Christ! What! *his* body the prey of corruption,—*impossible!*" But now Jesus takes pity on her; he knows what is her desire. He himself approaches. Then looking at her full in the face, he says, "Why weepest thou *whom* seekest thou?" He knew she was seeking *Person*; he knew she had said, "They have taken away *my Lord*, and I know not where they have laid *him*." Hence he says, "Whom seekest thou?" What a appeal to the very depths of her heart. And here his address differed from that of the angels; they had not asked, "*Whom?*" She supposed him to be the gardener. She mistook him. It was not that Jesus was altered, but that her faith was weak. Jesus never alters, it is *we* that alter. She says to him, "Sir, thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast placed him, and I will take him away." She does not exactly reply to his question. She cannot; her whole soul is intently absorbed in the wish, "Oh, that I knew where I might find him." I cannot refrain from again pointing out to you, dear friends, that thrice in her reply she says "*him*." Ah, what a religion he is. Not of frames and feelings,—not of mere doctrine and head knowledge,—but consisting in a glorio

on. God grant us more of it,—to be contented with nothing less than Christ himself. “And I myself” (*καγω*), says she, “will take him away.” She did not want the gardener to take him away; she would do it. Oh, for some of this intense love to which she had. Jesus says to her, “Mary!” who can tell,—who cannot, if they are christians, fine,—the peculiar tone and look with which that word was uttered! Such a sweet smile of love, graciously penetrating a glance, was now given to her, as thrilled through her very soul. Jesus knows his people, his brethren, their number, their names, all about them; as for the others, he knows them (Luke xiii. 26). But *they* are engraven on the palms of his hands (Isaiah xlix. 16), engraved with nails, with the pen of love (see John x. 1—14). As Jesus knows his sheep, so, too, do the sheep know their Shepherd’s voice. Oh, how instantly were Mary’s tears dried up; how quickly was she clasping his feet; she had found the Person she wanted; was clinging with all her weight to her dear Saviour, whilst in an agony of delight she exclaimed, “Thou art my Lord and my Saviour.” She could not say more, her heart too full. Then said Jesus, “Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” He forbids her to touch him, not because it is sinful to touch him, far from that. But a few days before those very same hands had anointed him. The woman with the bloody flux, too, had been assured by the Saviour that it was *faith* had impelled her to touch him (Matt. ix. 22). And even after his resur-

rection, Matthew assures us that Jesus allowed the company of women to hold him by the feet and worship him (Matt. xxviii. 9). Yea, Thomas was bid to thrust his hand into his risen Master's side. By his forbidding Mary from holding him, he taught her that the glory of his resurrection was yet but *half* achieved. She would fain have retained him in this world, and have demeaned herself as if he were still in the same condition as he was in previous to his death. He encourages her to lift up her thoughts much higher; that the very body which she grasped was now impassible and endued with immortality; that he, the first-born from the dead, was now, as Mediator, King of the Universe; that he and all his brethren had been now solemnly acquitted by Divine Justice; that it was not to be merely and barely an acquittal but that his Father and their Father, his God and their God, *in order to shew* how fully satisfied he was with his Son's work, and with his people in him, was now about to raise him to his own right hand, and set him there, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion (Eph. i. 20—23); that the Father could not endure that his covenant-people should be separated from him any longer, but that he was longing to have them with him in glory, and, as the initiatory step thereto, he would exalt him the Covenant Head and Elder Brother (Eph. i. 22); and this, my brethren, was implied in those apparently forbidding words of the dear Redeemer, as is manifest from the reason he himself assigns: "Touch me not FOR I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and you

d." Oh, dear friends, these are cheering words leed, they are enough to make one's heart leap for f.

You will all probably remember that St. Mark emphatically assures us that Mary Magdalene's interview with Christ, which we have just described, was he *first* one granted after the resurrection (Mark xvi. 9). Now, I think it is remarkable that it was on this very occasion that Christ bids us look further than the resurrection, and rivet our eyes on his ascension and session at the right hand of the Father. He would seem to teach us that the ascension was the completion of the resurrection. Only bear in mind, dear friends, that your eternal destiny is irrevocably linked with his, as he himself witnesses, "*Because I live, ye shall live also,*" and then you will see the importance of this view of the case. Are you really in earnest as to the welfare of your soul? Do you vividly realise what a terrible thing sin is in the sight of a holy God, and that *you* yourself are a sinner? Do you fully believe that Christ has undertaken your cause? Then you will be extremely anxious to know what view the holy God takes of Christ's work. If he shall exhibit the slightest dissatisfaction with it, you may well tremble, for it is your only hope of pardon. But then, when you see that God *himself* unbars the prison-gates of the tomb wherein your Surety, your Substitute, your Representative is confined, your heart grows lighter, and joyfully you exclaim, "He has paid for my sins,—he has satisfied the holy Law,—the Divine Creditor himself bids him go free: as he is free, I must be free too; for it was changing places with me that brought him to the

chains of the grave." But when you see that same heavenly Creditor, that same holy God, not content with declaring his full approbation of Christ's work by raising him from the dead, but also setting him at his right hand on his own throne, and giving him "to be the head over all things *to the church*," you are no longer able to contain yourself for joy, and now your language is, "Ah! I see that I am now ten thousand times safer, ten thousand times holier, ten thousand times more acceptable to God, than if I had never sinned at all; for then never should I have had so glorious a Surety, so precious a Saviour, so almighty a Brother, not only able to recover for me the life which I forfeited in Paradise, but also eternal life, and '*much more abundantly besides*'" (John x. 10). *If, then, I had a righteousness of my own, such as Adam would have had if he had kept God's holy law, I should be a great loser; for then I should have no title to that righteousness of Christ, which is given only to those that have none. It is this view of the case that leads the holy apostle to call all his own righteousness a real "loss," and "dung," and he means what he says, as it would hinder him from appropriating the righteousness of Christ. "Well, then," may some one of you say, "I may live as I list." And is that the language of your heart? And do you really mean thereby that you may live in sin? If so, rest assured you have no part nor lot in this matter. The christian does indeed live as he lists, so far as grace reigns in his heart. But how does he list to live? Go and read the sixth of Romans and see. Can he indulge in that which crucified his Saviour? Since Christ died unto sin, can we any longer live in sin? I trow not. In*

the death of Christ he learns to die to sin, and to mortify his members which are upon the earth; and as Christ has risen, he learns to despise the things of earth, to have his conversation in heaven, and to set his affection on heaven and heavenly things (Col. iii. 1—5). Although he knows that no good works which he can perform can render him one whit more righteous in the sight of God than he is already, seeing he is *complete* in Christ (Col. ii. 10), still that new and regenerate nature which God hath given him, so aspires after holiness, that if you quenched heaven and burnt hell, it would still lead its possessor to love and serve God. But to return.

Ever remember, dear friends, that it is the testimony of Scripture, first, that Jesus Christ raised himself from the dead (John ii. 19; John x. 17); and, secondly, that God the Father raised Christ (Acts ii. 32; Eph. i. 18; Gal. i. 1). Now each of these declarations is full of comfort to the believer. From the former he learns the greatness of that Saviour who has undertaken his cause, that he is no mere angel or archangel, but the divine Son himself. "It was *not possible*," says St. Peter, "that Christ should be held a prisoner by the grave" (Acts ii. 24). From the latter he obtains ocular demonstration (I use these strong words deliberately, and for emphasis repeat them,—*ocular demonstration*) that his sins are all and for ever forgiven by God himself. In the resurrection and ascension of Christ, I say, he hears God proclaiming, "See, how satisfied I am; thy sins be forgiven thee." Christ is raised "for *our* justification" (Rom. iv. 25). God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ gives to us a solid, living hope of his mercy by that very resurrec-

tion (1 Pet. i. 3). Not a single debt of ours remains unpaid, not a single sin of ours remains unatoned for, and therefore justice *must* release him; it *cannot*, no, it *cannot*, scathe us. Therefore is it written that God is "faithful *and just* to forgive us our sins" (1 John i. 9). As, if Christ had not made ample satisfaction, God would neither have been faithful nor just in forgiving us; so now, since Christ has done all that he has, God would not be faithful or just in withholding forgiveness. But he has no desire to withhold it, otherwise he would never have provided the ransom which he did.

Are you still fearful, oh, ye of little faith? Then come to Mount Olivet. Listen to the Saviour there, addressing his disciples: "I go to prepare a place for you; . . . where I am, there shall ye be also." Now see he is lifting up his hands to bless them. Whilst in the act of blessing them, he is parted from them; as if to teach us what he is still doing, although the blue sky hides him from our eyes. His abode is changed, but not his heart. Then slowly he ascends; higher and higher does he soar; upward still he mounts; the angelic choir bursts out in triumphant strains: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Psalm xxiv. 7, 8). He has overcome death, he has vanquished hell, he has spoiled principalities and powers (Col. ii. 15). Solemnly, majestically, the Conqueror enters heaven; he approaches the throne of his eternal Father; his brow is decked with many *diadems* (Rev. xix. 12); the Almighty proclaims,

"This is my beloved Son, in him I am well pleased;" and, as a token of his approbation, causes him to sit down at his own right hand. But, you may ask, what extreme comfort does this afford us? Christ truly is in heaven, but we are on earth. My brethren, if you would but remember that in all Christ's work God viewed us as united to him, as one with him, you would discern the importance of the ascension of Christ to your comfort. He did not suffer and die for himself, but for us, his church, whom he had betrothed to him; he did not rise for himself, for as God he never died, but he rose for us, we rose in him. I mean that we are to view ourselves as so intimately united with Christ, that we are to look upon ourselves as already risen, because he is risen. He is the Head, we are the members. What the Representative does, all whom he represents do *in him*. When Christ took possession of his seat at the right hand of God, ever remember, it was in our name. Hence, if you desire to honour Christ, you are to regard yourself as if you were already in heaven, and that you must inevitably get there, because your Covenant Head is there. When you behold him crowned, you are to regard yourself as already crowned. When you behold him seated at the right hand of God, you are to recognise how much more Christ has done for us, than merely recovered us from the fall of Adam. When you hear the eternal Father declaring his approbation, you are to remember that that declaration respects not the Son of God only, but you. God does not say, "*With Christ I am well pleased*;" that were to assert a mere truism, which cannot but be the case. But God says, "*IN thee I am well pleased*:" that is, he regards the

church as "*in*" Christ, as one with Christ, and proclaims, "In Christ my Son I am well pleased with you my people." When, once more, you behold Christ upon the throne of God, you are not merely to say, "How glorious *art* THOU;" but also, "In Thee how glorious *am* I." In all, I repeat it, in Christ's death, in his resurrection, in his ascension, in his session at the throne of the Father, you are to view him as your Brother, your Head, your Representative, your Husband. "Your life is hid," witnesses the apostle to the christians of Colosse, "with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3). And in the second chapter of the same epistle, the apostle says, "You being dead in your sins . . . hath he quickened *together* with him" (Col. ii. 13). Still more emphatically does the same apostle testify in another place to the same glorious truth: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us *together with Christ* (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised *us up together*, and made us *sit together* in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 4—6). Are these words true, my brethren? Are they the very words of the living God? And are we ourselves personally interested in them? Then let us bid adieu to fear; at the sight of death let our hearts be calm; on the judgment-morn let us hold our heads erect and thereby glorify him who shall sit upon the great white throne,—our Brother, our Husband, our Friend.

Brethren, I end with the apostle's words to Timothy in his second epistle, second chapter, and eighth verse—words which I pray may be indelibly engraved upon your hearts,—“Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead.”

VIII.

THE LORD OF ALL.

"He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: to bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom."—Psalm cv. 21, 22.

My brethren, have you ever been in trouble? And if so, have you ever been delivered? Although, indeed, the trouble appeared grievous whilst it was being endured, yet was not the subsequent deliverance all the sweeter in proportion as that trouble had been the severer? The joy consequent thereupon, you know, was much more intense than it would have been had your affliction been more trifling. Especially was that joy enhanced if the Lord himself was manifestly and evidently your deliverer. Your emotions then were almost overpowering. You could then look back into the trouble, and clearly see how the Lord was with you in it; you could then discern this and that proof of his presence which you failed to realise so vividly before; you could mark the different steps in which you had been led on; the Hand that had guided you was no longer unseen; you could observe that the prayer was dropped into your heart, and that you were enabled to wrestle more earnestly with the Lord as his time for appearing drew nigh; and hence you were ashamed, you were confounded, at the impatience and

fretfulness which you had exhibited, and at the unbelief which you had felt in your heart, and with tears,—grateful tears,—loving tears,—you looked up to your heavenly Father, and told him that you wondered at his taking such pains with so wayward and perverse a child. Love him! ah, you did think you loved him then. Fervently did you implore that you might ever afterwards trust him, however mysterious his ways might appear to you. You saw, you felt, he was a dear, good God, and you were anxious that you might never more doubt that goodness. How worthy he seemed of your entire confidence, of your unwavering affection, of your intensest love!

Such, also, were probably the emotions which Joseph experienced as he listened to the authoritative declarations of the Egyptian monarch. How he must have been startled when Pharaoh took him at his word, and turning to the attendant courtiers enquired, "Can we find such an one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" Perhaps he had imagined that he was building the fortunes of Potiphar, who would in recompense restore him to his stewardship: but to be so unexpectedly elevated to be the supreme lord of Egypt; to be taken by the hand by the king himself, and by him to be lifted above all the throng of nobles, and invested with far more irresponsible and perpetual power than prime minister ever enjoyed: all this was as sudden and unlooked for as it was an entire fulfilment of the promises divinely made to him in his prophetic dreams. Oh, surely, as the Spirit of God dwelt in him, and as he now evidently perceived that God was and all along had been with him, that all things had been working together for his good, that

even his previous disgrace was the necessary step to his present advancement,—all this must have melted his heart with gratitude, and prostrated his soul with silent adoration towards his untiring and beneficent Benefactor. That God who had dealt so graciously with him, my brethren, had in Joseph the same naturally rebellious, and wayward, and unbelieving child, as he has now in each of us; for we are all alike by nature, none better than another (Eph. ii. 1—3; 1 Cor. iv. 7). God loved Joseph; that was the secret spring and cause of all his gentleness and goodness towards him.

To the proposition of Pharaoh none of his attendants objects. Those sagacious men behold too clearly their master's will expressed in his determined countenance, to oppose him if they had had the desire. But even this they have not. They feel that the things which Joseph has predicted will inevitably come to pass; each in his heart acknowledges his own unfitness to assume the reins of government, in prospect of the remarkable and difficult times which are impending; each perceives the absolute necessity of a truly wise, and prudent, and holy man being at the helm, if ever the kingdom is to be conducted safely through the approaching crisis; each heart accords the post of honour to Joseph. The king, who had been previously alarmed at the events portended by his dreams, now is overjoyed as the able counsel of the interpreter strikes upon his ear, and as the thought occurs to his mind that that counsellor is the very man to whom to entrust the care of his kingdom. He appears to labour to express the complacency and approbation with which he regards him, and lavishes

upon him the highest honours of the realm with unsparing and princely hand. At the morbid bidding, the second chariot of Egypt is brought. Then Joseph, habited in fine linen, with a gold about his neck, and with Pharaoh's ring, signifying delegated sovereignty, upon his hand, is conducted by troops of obsequious nobles to the precincts of the palace. How attentive and respectful they all are to him. They know that if they are to enjoy the favour, they must ingratiate themselves with Potiphar, — the lordly Potiphar, — seems especially anxious to do him homage. He assists him to mount the car, and with his officers he undertakes its management. Crowds of courtiers throng around him soon, under the direction of the captain of the guard, and before the eyes of the delighted Pharaoh, a stately procession is formed. Then to the sound of trumpet it sets forward, preceded by a herald claiming "Abrech, Abrech,"* whose cry is everywhere echoed back by all the train. On and on it slowly moves through the crowded streets, the multitude on all sides promptly doing reverence. At this time it passes by the slave-market, where twenty years before the now honoured one had been exposed as a slave for sale. Oh, what mingled and strange emotions does not the sight of this place excite in his breast! How he recalls to mind the bitter agonizing thoughts that then wrung his soul, and recognises the spot to which he was chained. Mentally he exclaims: "O my God, I have no friend *but* Thee, but what a friend hast Thou been to me! Thou hast taken care of me; Thou hast

* That is, "Bow the knee."

ne; Thou hast hitherto fulfilled thy gracious
es; it is Thou that hast made the king's heart
urably disposed towards me. Thou wilt go on,

God; Thou wilt bring my father, Thou wilt
my brethren, to behold my glory. Thou wilt
thou hast said." At length he arrives within
of the prison where for three long years he had
d so much. That happy man there is his friend
oler who is watching for him; their eyes meet;
of joy comes to the relief of each. Yonder are
mestics of Potiphar anxious to feast their eyes
the sight of Joseph's triumph; whose eager
is directed in search of that woman who had

him so much misery, in order that, by a
as look, he may assure her of his forgiveness.
ie is not there. She, indeed, beholds him from
low, but unseen by him. Profound is her vexa-
s she marks her servants vieing with each other
hall obtain a smile from him. As for Joseph,
art is full. Thoughts of home,—solicitude for
ther and his brethren,—reminiscences of by-
ears of sorrow,—of the many familiar and kind
ie is encountering,—the suddenness of his de-
ice and elevation,—the clear perception of the
rence of all the previous circumstances of his
ch and all tending towards his present advance-
—the raising Ebenezers of gratitude and praise
God,—all these occupy his mind as the chariot
ds on its course. At last the procession returns
palace. Again Joseph stands before Pharaoh,
to inspire him with perfect confidence, thus
ily swears: "I am Pharaoh, and without thee
no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of

Egypt." That is to say, "As sure as I am Pharaoh, king of Egypt, so sure shall all opposition fall before thee, so sure shall all Egypt own thy sway!" The nobles hear and learn their duty. They understand that in paying homage to Joseph they are yielding fealty to their king; that contempt of the favourite will be rebellion against their sovereign. To crown all, the grateful monarch confers upon him a new name, which in Coptic indeed, signifies "Revealer of secrets," but in Egyptian, Jerome* himself being witness, means "*Saviour of the world*;" and gives him the hand of Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah, priest† of On, in marriage.

Behold, then, my brethren, Joseph now lord of all Egypt. Hark to the sound of his chariot, as it rolls throughout the length and breadth of the land. Witness the vast changes, the immense designs, he is effecting. See the many officials of high rank superintending the execution of his orders. See the gaping crowds staring at the innumerable granaries springing up in every direction. All is bustle, all is activity. Joseph appears to have put new life into the whole nation. At length the Nile begins to rise,‡ the

* Jerome says this name signified in Egyptian *Salvator mundi*, the Saviour of the world; and *Prot-em-phaneh*, in Coptic, is certainly "salvation of the world," from $\Psi\Omega\Gamma$, for $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\iota\alpha$, salvation, *em* the sign of the genitive case, and $\Phi\epsilon\eta\eta$, world."—*Bagster's note in loc.*

† The word כהן here translated "priest" means also "prince," as is proved by comparing 2 Sam. viii. 18, where the sons of David are said to be כהנים, with 1 Chron. xviii. 17, where the former passage is interpreted, and הראשנים "the chief" is substituted for כהנים. But, however, if Potipherah was "priest" of On, yet we know that in Egypt the priestly caste ranked next to the royal family.

‡ The ordinary height of the inundations of the Nile is sixteen cubits. When the waters are lower than this standard, they do not overflow the ground; when above this standard, they are too long in running off. In the first case,

people, as usual, are anxious; the nobles, who are aware of his predictions, are curious. It overflows; the flood increases. The nation is elated; all envy is hushed; the king's opinion of his minister is confirmed. The harvest that year is magnificent, exceeding in abundance the expectations of the most sanguine. Yet none is wasted. With ample resources at his command, the spare grain is everywhere so eagerly purchased by the minister and his prefects, that some improvident souls are heard to complain of scarcity, and to murmur against him who is the cause of it. Soon the granaries are filled, and the number of sacks of corn is immense. Again the sound of the hammer is heard throughout all the cities of Egypt, and store-houses on a much larger scale than the others are built. The second year is witness of equal profusion with the first. Joseph exhibits the same zeal in buying up the corn as he did the previous year, and multitudes are on all sides wondering at his extreme care. The preceding year they had imagined that he was afraid of a slender harvest this; but now that he has already accumulated so much grain, wherefore does he continue his diligence? In the palace, however, and by all the courtiers, he is regarded with veneration; his word is law. In the next year he is equally diligent, and the next. The people begin to imagine that they shall always enjoy the like abundance; and were it not for the industry of the great corn gatherer, the waste

the ground is not saturated; by the second, the waters are detained so long on the ground that seed time is lost. If the river only rise twelve cubits, a *famine* is the consequence; at thirteen, *hunger* prevails; fourteen produces *general rejoicing*; fifteen, perfect *security*; and sixteen, all the luxuries of life. So entirely does the fertility of Egypt depend upon the inundations of its great river.—*Pliny's Hist. Nat.*, lib. 5, c. 3.

would be prodigious. Meanwhile the number of sacks has so vastly increased as ultimately to defy all calculation. For a long time the unwearied Joseph had continued to reckon; but now, through sheer excess, he is compelled to desist. In the emphatic language of scripture, "Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering, for it was without number." Thus the time rolls swiftly on, unnoticed by the people, who now regard the plenty as a matter of course, and by Joseph, whose one object almost wholly absorbs him. By many he would have been regarded ere this as a mere enthusiast, did they not behold the prompt and implicit submission with which haughty court officials act out his very mandate.

But now the seventh year has passed, and the minister's chariot is not beheld so frequently. All had become so habituated to his diligence, that now wonder is again beheld in every countenance. This is, however, soon exchanged for consternation, when the time of the river's swell goes bye without the usual inundation. Their terror is no little increased by the reports which the merchants' caravans are constantly bringing of severe famine threatening each of their respective countries. Soon, however, the remembrance of Joseph's hoarded granaries sends a thrill of joy into every bosom. In the palace, the latest news from the Nile had been anxiously received. Then the curiosity was intense as to whether the second part also of Joseph's declarations would be punctually fulfilled. Perhaps some of the courtiers, jealous of the favourite's greatness, had sought to instil into the monarch's ears the possibility of the river continuing to

swell thus for many more years; or, at all events, had secretly harboured the thought and wish. But when the eighth year had arrived, and it had become evident that a famine was indeed impending, surely, even in their breasts, jealousy would give place to gratitude.

It is not long ere the last remains of the preceding year's supplies have diminished, and want brings the people to the throne of Pharaoh. His reply is brief and emphatic: "Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do." As much as to say, "I have appointed a mediator between myself and you, and it is wilful disobedience to me, and the greatest dishonour of him, passing by him to rush immediately into my presence. Seek Joseph; attend to what he says; by so doing you will preserve your lives." Now Joseph opens all his storehouses; the Egyptians gather round him, and behold the immense abundance which he has accumulated for their support. All fear of starvation is now utterly dispelled, and they begin to regard Joseph as the saviour of themselves and of their families. But not Egypt merely is benefited by its lord's wisdom. The famine is in all lands, and the eyes of all nations are upon Joseph. All are entirely dependant on the mercy of one man. Oh, it must have been a touching sight to have witnessed the thousands of natives, and the tens of thousands of foreigners, daily surrounding the car of Egypt's potent minister, each in his own tongue humbly supplicating him for food; and then to have marked their varied emotions at the liberal distribution made to each of them! Do any of them, in their way home, meet any half-starved souls? Go to Joseph, Go to Joseph, lord of Egypt! will be their constant advice. How, when they return to their

liberal benefactor : and he appointed him p
prime minister? Then will he seek not
honour, but the honour of his king. He
treasury, he stocks his pastures; afterwards
chases, in his master's name, the whole land of
except that which belonged to the priests; an
establishes the equitable law, that the fifth pa
proceeds shall ever after be considered as due
The king had spared no pains to magnify
favourite; and now, therefore, his utmost ai
honour and exalt the king. Yet in these arran
the nation's weal is not neglected. The king's
and the people's prosperity are linked indi
together. Their cattle, after being supporte
royal expense, are doubtless restored to thei
end of the famine, otherwise they had been u
cultivate their ground or transport their merc
Joseph's prudence and humanity are also em
his removing the inhabitants of the remote
and villages nearer to the cities of store in or

one year, how many would probably expect that the next year's plenty would be all the greater. But when the second year came, and the famine was still as severe as in the preceding one, the thought of the minister's profound wisdom and provident care would surely almost engross their minds. And, notwithstanding the silence of the sacred story, we may well imagine that Joseph, who feared God and was his child, would oftentimes tell the grateful multitudes of that One unseen eternal Being, who in love to them had unfolded to him the coming famine. How frequently, too, would he himself adore that gracious God of his, who had made him so completely forget all his previous affliction, and had exalted him so highly in the eyes of all the world! Would he not often think within himself, "God has more than kept his word! He did, indeed, lead me to expect that he would make me great, but who could have surmised that he would make me to be as a father unto Pharaoh, the joy of his nation, the preserver of the world! And then, too, to think that all my enemies' designs, and all my bitter troubles, have been rendered subservient to this my present glory! My brethren's hatred, and Potiphar's injustice, have each materially assisted in placing me on the vice-regal throne of Egypt!" Oh, yes, it is impossible but that the remarkable manner of God's fulfilment of his word must have often called forth his enthusiastic admiration as well as his mute and rapturous praise. But yet all these strange events in the life of Jacob's beloved son were but a rehearsal and panoramic representation before the eyes of the Old Testament church of those still stranger and grander circumstances in the life of the Christ of God.

as they appear to the delighted eyes of us upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Yes, brethren, it may well ravish our hearts to behold the wondrous glory of our Elder Brother and Covenant Head, our own Lord Jesus. Many are his enemies, many, very many, have been the designs which have been plotted against him, yet not one has ever succeeded, nor ever shall succeed. His enemies succeed! Quite the reverse. Mark me. Holy Scripture teaches us that each and every device imagined, and every endeavour made, against the glory of the Lord Jesus, shall not only utterly fail, but shall itself be the platform for the greater display of that glory, and for the more complete confusion of his adversaries. So, too, we find that when Satan or any one would attempt anything against Jesus Christ, he is not immediately hindered from proceeding, but oftentimes is allowed to try his utmost; the thing progresses; it nears completion, when, lo, just as we might expect to hear the triumphant shout of the enemy, it is discovered that that very identical design, yea, and its execution too, were only the means of advancing the purposes and glory of the Lord himself. Thus in the garden of Eden, the arch-enemy of mankind accomplished his utmost wishes. Adam was seduced from his allegiance to his Creator; and then began the development of that covenant of grace which was in the eternal Mind before the world began (2 Tim. i. 9; Rev. xiii. 8). As long as Adam was innocent, that covenant could not take effect,—God's attribute of mercy was almost unknown; but Satan, by successfully tempting our forefather, himself afforded the occasion of the sublime scheme of redemption being manifested.

Thus was the wrath, not of man, but of the devil himself, made to praise God (Psalm lxxvi. 10). Had access to Eden been denied to the tempter, the power of God would indeed have been beheld; but when entrance to it and success in it were permitted to him, and then that very success made not only to truckle to the Lord's plan, but remarkably to dovetail in it, then might that cry well have been raised by an adoring universe, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out" (Rom. xi. 33). So, again, at the crucifixion of the Redeemer, Satan was allowed to triumph to his heart's desire; and now we find that by that very Cross his kingdom has been for ever destroyed, and the glory of the Crucified exhibited in such a manner as that all creation may thence for ever learn more, and more, and more, of the character of its Creator than in all else besides. Surely, surely, with all his cunning, Satan never did a more foolish thing,—a thing more injurious to his own interests, than when he instigated the Jews to slay the Son of God. And, once more, observe how the roaring lion is allowed to harass Christ's poor helpless sheep. He disturbs none else. All others he has secure, but on these he expends all his cunning. For one he has one temptation, for another another. Into one breast he is allowed to inject this fear, and into another that doubt. And this warfare he persists in with every christian soul right unto the gates of heaven. And yet, notwithstanding all this, he has never been able to ruin a single christian soul. Never! And bear in mind how weak these souls are, how prone by nature to evil. Here, on the one hand, is a mighty

and cunning archangel, with the experience of six thousand years to assist him; and on the other hand, there is such a soul as the Scriptures graphically describe under the figure of a bruised reed, and of smoking flax. How easy, one would think, it would be to break a reed already bruised, to quench flax merely smoking. And yet in no case has Satan ever succeeded! He may, and does, invariably exert all his power to break that bruised reed, and still it is unbroken; he may send floods of temptation to quench that smoking flax, and still it is unquenched. How is this to be accounted for? Because, like as in the bush, burning with fire yet not consumed, which Moses saw, Jehovah Shammah—The Lord is there. This is the single reason of this phenomenon. It would not be so magnificent a spectacle to behold Christ himself conquering Satan, because it is but likely that the stronger shall overcome the weaker, nor would such a victory entail such thorough disgrace upon Satan; but that he, an archangel, shall in every instance be overcome by a puny, sinful worm of the dust, this, indeed, may well shame him. And that Christ, with such poor instruments as we are, can achieve such extreme triumphs as he constantly does; oh, indeed, this does exhibit the glory of the Saviour! Thus it is "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. viii. 37). Yea, more, when Satan tempts a poor soul that belongs to Christ, as Peter, and when he prevails, you might think then a little honour was due to Satan. But not so. For notice the effect. Before Peter fell, he was ignorant of himself, and so proud, that he boasted before the Saviour of how much he was prepared to undergo in his behalf (Luke xxii. 33).

But when Peter had fallen, and had been restored by the loving look of his gracious Lord, he would learn by experience to walk more humbly, to distrust himself more entirely, and to rest more simply on the Saviour. So that here was the devil, the master of pride, made to teach Peter a lesson of humility.*

Thus, then, in every case have all the devices of Satan, and all the opposition of the world against Christ, miserably failed, whether directed against him personally, or more insidiously, through his beloved people; and not only so, but each and all have greatly contributed to the further manifestation of his unutterable glory. Look at that Divine Redeemer sitting down upon his Father's throne; hear the exulting Peter declaring to Cornelius the joyful news concerning his risen and ascended Master, that "He is Lord of all;" mark how he continues his message to that first Gentile convert: "God annointed Jesus of Nazareth; . . . God was with him; . . . Him they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly" (Acts x. 36—40); listen also to another apostle as he declares that Christ became "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, wherefore God hath highly exalted him" (Phil. ii. 9); and then you will be constrained to acknowledge that even Satan himself has been the

* I would wish to guard all christians against the use of the term, "final perseverance," as applied to the eternal safety of the children of God. For it implies that that safety is due, at least to some extent, to some effort of theirs, which they well know is unscriptural. Their prayer is, "Hold *Thou* me up, and I shall be safe" (Psalm cxix. 117). Their language is,

"If but a moment thou withdraw;

That moment sees me break thy law."

They know that they shall attain heaven merely on account of the covenant, ordered in all things and sure, the blood of the Cross, and the arm of their God. I would, therefore, prefer the term, "final preservation."

unwilling instrument of furthering the glory of the Mediator Jesus to the utmost of his power.

But I want you to contemplate this glory of Jesus yet more closely. There is a glory which, as "God over all," he had with the Father "before the world was" (Rom. ix. 5; John xvii. 5). Now just glance for a moment at this. Here was a Personage so illustrious, so divinely great, that the apostle asserts that his susception of the human nature, and of the mediatorial office, was an example of profound humility (Phil. ii. 5—11). Now no creature, not even the highest archangel of heaven, could possibly have manifested humility in this way. For between the Creator and the creature, even the most exalted one, there must ever remain an infinite distance. But the Mediator was to be exalted far above all principalities and powers. Where, then, had been the unparalleled condescension, had any mere creature consented to take the office in the prospect of such a radiant throne as he would afterwards have to ascend? The nobleman who should become a slave, knowing that in consequence he should be made a king, would not surely afford any pattern of condescension. He must be a king already, incapable of obtaining any accession to his greatness, ere his entering on the state of slavery could furnish a pattern of humility. And, in like manner, none but a Divine Being, incapable of exaltation, can justly be said to have given a model of condescension in becoming our Mediator. Who, then, was this illustrious Personage, in whom it was condescension to assume an office which was to lead to a majesty without parallel amongst the dignities of creation? Yea, further, who is this Being that can

bear the weight of such transcendent greatness ; on whom rest the pillars of the universe ; who is able to act as the vicegerent of the Lord God Almighty ? Who can wield power so immense, who has wisdom equal to such an office, save the only begotten Son, who is of the same nature as his Father ? For now, secondly, my brethren, look at his glory which is his as Mediator. Only in the throne is God greater than Jesus (Gen. xli. 40 ; John xiv. 28). The supreme Sovereignty of creation is delegated unto him (1 Cor. xv. 27). God having raised up Christ from the dead, hath seated him at "his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name" (how the apostle labours to express Christ's greatness) "that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet" (Eph. i. 20—22). Behold, my brethren, how gloriously, how like a Conqueror, Jesus ascends to his Father's throne. Having been made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, he is now crowned with glory and honour (Heb. ii. 9). See how he has "spoiled," or "stripped" of their usurped dominion, the principalities and powers of hell, which had all opposed him. He has rescued his church, which Satan appeared to hold in such secure bondage. Death need no longer terrify those that trust in him. The grave is now perfumed with the body of Jesus, which has lain there ; the Saviour has made it to his own the gate of Paradise. Behold how triumphantly he mounts on high, leading captivity captive, dragging Satan and his legions as conquered foes at his chariot wheels. All creation beholds, admires, adores (Col. ii. 15).

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in." Hymn his praises, all ye choirs of angels, for he is worthy! Behold the Father's Well-beloved; know ye that your existence and your happiness depend entirely on him! All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth! "Worship him, all ye gods" (Ps. xcvi. 7). Worship him, all ye flaming cherubim and seraphim; and as for you, ye prostrate foes, who cannot yield a voluntary submission, know ye *must* yield an extorted one (Ps. lxi. 3). Now, O Satan, that Jesus is exalted, and has sat down at the right hand of God, dare you still accuse? Ah, you turn pale; you are speechless! You know full well that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

Oh, brethren, it is indeed delightful to remember that it is a Man, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, our Brother and our Head, that has sat down on the throne of God. The man Christ Jesus sustains creation: were it not for him, all things would instantly drop into their pristine nothingness (Col. i. 17). The sceptre of the universe is in perforated hands. The "angels, authorities, and powers" of heaven do indeed gladly recognise and unreservedly acknowledge him as their Lord and King (1 Peter iii. 2). They, if they have the inclination, have not the ability to sustain and govern the world, and to protect and save the church of God. Most heartily, therefore, and unanimously, are those cares resigned to him. The government rests upon his shoulder; and he is adequate to it, for his name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah ix. 6). He need not, he does not, lay up in

store for all the countless millions that depend on him: oh, no, all fulness dwells in him. He has no granaries, no resources, on which to fall back; he needs none. Christ is all, and in all. Infinite riches dwell in Christ himself. Have his gifts to any of us been already innumerable? His open hand is still as full; his liberal heart is still as willing. Yea, you glorify him more, the more you receive from him. If you ask for little, you imply either that he is poor or that he is niggardly. How can he be poor, who in an instant could create a thousand times as many worlds as throng the sky? How can he be niggardly, when he has given himself for us to God an offering and a sweet-smelling sacrifice? Jesus is exalted on purpose to give freely the most costly blessings (Psalm lxviii. 18;* Acts iii. 26, and v. 31). His direction is, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Psalm lxxxi. 10). When, for instance, one unused to pray has lisped his desire to him, and he has granted it, he meant thereby to encourage him to ask for more and greater blessings. You know how a raw and unskilful practitioner is cheered on in his work. His master looks at his performance, appears not to notice its defects, and says, "That's right; well done; you will soon improve," and so on. Thus does Jesus oftentimes behave to those that know not his rich love. They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivers them out of their distress. He gives them a slight taste of his goodness, in order to increase their appetite. Much sin was mixed with

* In this passage (Psalm lxviii. 18), Christ is said to have "received gifts for men." In the apostle's quotation of these words we find a remarkable alteration. He says, Christ "gave gifts unto men:" as if to teach us that Christ is the channel, giving all that he receives. He presents to our view Christ, with one hand receiving, with the other distributing, gifts.

their prayer, yet Jesus listened to it in order that they might be emboldened to seek for richer mercies still. Yea, whatever care we have, he bids us roll it upon him. Whatever want we feel, he would have us breathe it in his ear. When he calls himself the God "I AM" (Exodus iii. 14; John viii. 8), he does thereby present to us a blank cheque, and bids us fill it up to any amount we please. Are we hungry? "I am," says he, "the bread of life" (John vi. 48). Are we anxious? "I am," says he, "God Almighty" (Gen. xvii. 1). Are we fearful? His language is, "It is I, be not afraid" (John vi. 20). Do any of you mourn and say, "Alas, I am a sinner"? His cheering reply is, "I am thy salvation" (Psalm xxxv. 3). And this salvation, the most precious of all his gifts, is what he takes greatest delight in bestowing. Oh, to think that *not one poor sinner ever truly asked for pardon and was refused!* Refuse! that be far from him. How can he? His whole heart and soul goes with this gift. Unlike Joseph, he does not sell his favours; invariably he gives them. His terms are, "Without money and without price!" But this unbounded liberality of Jesus it will be my pleasing duty to point out to you more fully upon another occasion; suffice it now to say, that the fulness of Jesus should lead us to bid adieu to care. Nor is he kind to his saints alone: "The Lord," witnesses the Psalmist, "the Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. The eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Psalm cxlv. 9, 15, 16). Oh, *what a Jesus is he!* He is kind to all, to his church

and to the world, for his church's sake (2 Cor. iv. 15). Every human soul is benefited by his love to the church. His veriest foes live entirely upon his bounty. The Laplander, the New Zealander, the Chinaman, the Englishman, all partake largely of his goodness. Yet ever remember that what Jesus has to bestow are not *purchased* blessings; they are "gifts." Jesus did not purchase *anything*, no, not heaven* itself; he purchased his church, and his church alone (Eph v. 25). But these "gifts" he bestows liberally, and to all men (James i. 5). What a good Lord he is! Strange that any should turn away from One so truly, so pre-eminently good, and seek to obtain access to the Father without the intervention of Christ. Alas, for the wickedness of man's heart! Alas, for the natural antipathy to the Son of God! How can such succeed, when the Father has expressly said, "This is my beloved Son; . . . hear him"? And Christ has emphatically warned us, that no man cometh to the Father but by him. Seek you then, my brethren, any favour? Desire you any mercy? Go unto our Joseph,—go unto Jesus, and you will be astonished at the gracious treatment you will receive. Jesus is on his Father's throne, diffusing far and wide his mercies unto man.

But not even yet do we see all things put under him (Heb. xx. 8). Despite his extreme goodness he has many foes. He is still the despised and rejected of men. But "he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25). Still he sits

* Calvin saw this when he thus commented on the word *περιποιησις* in Eph. i. 14. "Acquisita hereditas, non est regnum cœlorum, aut beata immortalitas, sed ipsa ecclesia."

upon his Father's throne, continually directing the arrows of his word into the hearts of his unconverted, estranged brethren (Psalm xlv. 5, with Heb. iv. 12). Now one stout-hearted sinner and now another is brought to the acknowledgment of the truth; and oftentimes, too, like Saul of old, to preach that faith which once he destroyed. How many rebellious sinners has not his grace subdued and led to sue for mercy, yea, even of those who seemed the most unlikely for grace itself ever to reach? Not one of you ungodly sinners can certainly say, "Grace shall never take hold of me." Zaccheus, whose heart seemed impregnable, being enshrined in the love of gold, and who, impelled by mere curiosity, sought to see Jesus, yet when he heard the Almighty's word, "To-day I *must* abide at thy house," received Christ joyfully, and gave half of his goods to the poor. What if grace should grasp *you*! What a monument of mercy you would be! What a wonder to yourself and every one around you! But if it should not, still remember that Jesus is your Lord. You cannot proceed one step further in hatred and opposition to him than he allows you. You are, however unconsciously to yourself, under bit and bridle. And do not imagine, because Christ has myriads of enemies besides you, that therefore your cause is somewhat more hopeful. No such thing. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm ix. 17). Though there be whole nations of them, yet shall Christ take them in hand quite as easily as if they were but a few individuals. Easy! Nothing is easy to Christ, for nothing is difficult. All is alike to him, *whether* it be to create one sand or a thousand worlds,

—to frustrate the devices of one man or of a thousand archangels, if they attempted any. However, the second Psalm is yet prophecy. His enemies are still busy. All seem buckling on their armour for some terrible combat. Popery, in every clime and place, is beheld rearing its horrid head, and again struggling for the mastery. Grim infidelity is stalking with monstrous strides throughout every land, taking possession of India, as well as of France and England. Every successive year witnesses some newly-hatched heresies. Petty distinctions between them quickly disappear,—they soon are submerged and lost in the greater and more popular delusions. The Puseyite, it is an historical fact, is looking with friendly eye upon the Infidel, and the Infidel is beginning to understand the Puseyite and Roman Catholic; for one is their master, even Satan, and all they, they soon discover, are brethren. In one thing they perfectly agree—in determined hostility to Christ and real vital religion. All are trying to govern and mend the world in their own way. The idea of the Sacred Scriptures, that is, of the word of Christ, having any voice in this matter, is ridiculed as absurd. Senate-houses are considered the most unsuitable places in which to quote the word of the Lord. Ah! the world's wise ones would fain wrest the sceptre from Christ's hands. But the Crucified must reign; and all things portend that the glorious time of his coming is drawing near: even now the sound of his chariot wheels can be distinctly heard by the ear of faith. The signs of the very last days, as they are depicted in the word of God, are fulfilling before our eyes. The battle of Armageddon is plainly approaching (Rev. xvi. 13—16). The days

of Popery are numbered. The cry of the Moslem waxes fainter and fainter. Turkey is dying for want of Turks. China, with its teeming millions, it is now plain, has heard much more of the everlasting gospel than the most sanguine missionary had previously anticipated. Jerusalem, that deserted city,—the Jews, that scattered nation, that nation without a king, now occupy the attention of statesmen. Many, very many, are running to and fro. Distance is almost annihilated. Hurry is the order of the day. Inventions are no longer profitable: what was new yesterday is superseded to-day. Institutions that seemed destined to last for ages are crumbling to pieces or giving place to others. The whole world is, as it were, in a highly electric state. As for thrones, they are like children's playthings; one moment they seem to stand firm, the next they rock, they fall. For "thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him" (Ezek. xxi. 26, 27). "He whose right it is!" Who is He? Jesus. Jesus must reign "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth" (Psalm lxxii. 8). God will glorify Jesus, for Jesus glorified him. All other kings are intent upon their own selfish interests and aggrandizement. Look at the eighty-second Psalm; mark there the Lord's expostulation with the rulers of the earth for their ungodliness and wrong. Then in the seventh verse their doom is solemnly pronounced; and in the eighth verse He is invoked to come whose *right it is*. "Arise, O God, judge the earth; for *Thou*

shalt inherit all nations." Jesus is the heir of all things (Psalm ii. 8; Rom. iv. 13; Heb. i. 2). And Jesus is coming soon! Creation is groaning in bondage, waiting for the coming of her Lord.* From every spot on which a christian dwells the cry is incessantly ascending heaven, and entering into the ears of the Redeemer,—the very cry which he himself taught them to utter, "*Thy* kingdom come." The Bible ends with gathering up in one short emphatic prayer—the intense and longing hope of all the militant church, "Lord Jesus, come quickly." The church above besiege his throne with their importunate cry, "How long, O Lord," how long? (Rev. vi. 10.) "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" Faith! oh, no. The enemies of the Lord will be imagining that they have at last obtained the upper hand. The saints of God, who had so tormented them by their testimony and their lives, are now at last effectually put down. The three unclean spirits like frogs, which proceeded out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet (Rev. xvi. 13),—that is to say, Infidelity, and Popery, and Puseyism,—have done their work skilfully, they have gathered the whole world together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Bible christianity is almost unknown;

* From Romans viii. 20—23, it appears that the creation itself is groaning and longing for the time of "the redemption of our body." But our bodies will be raised when Christ comes (1 Cor. xv. 52). Therefore the creation is longing for the time of Christ coming, at which time the curse shall be removed (verse 21).

the world has got too enlightened to bear it. Vital religion is indeed at a low ebb. Iniquity abounds. The love of many, who once made a loud profession, has waxed cold. Scoffers are derisively asking, "Where is the promise of his coming, with which those pious hypocrites attempted to frighten us?" "Whilst we live," continue they, "let us live; let us enjoy life whilst we have it: death is an eternal sleep." The whole world is immersed in carnal security and ease. It is ripe for destruction (Rev. xiv. 15). Now will Jesus appear. He will come as a thief in the night. He will catch the world as in a trap.* It may be midnight, it may be midday; some are eating, others drinking; some are buying, others selling; some are planting, others building; some are marrying, others are being given in marriage; when, lo, suddenly the heavens are rent in twain, and One sitting upon a white horse is seen, whose name is Faithful and True (Rev. xix. 11). But, oh! his gaze who can endure it! for his eyes are as a flame of fire. Pleasure and business are instantly forgotten. Terror is engraved upon every countenance. A wild shriek is heard: "Ye mountains, fall on us, ye hills, cover us, and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb." Even now the battle appears already won, for consternation fills the ranks of his foes. The Lord descends. His feet stand upon the Mount of Olives,—the very place which they last touched previous to his ascension into heaven. The touch of those feet splits the mountains, half of which remove towards the north, and half towards the

* Luke xxi. 35: "As a *snare* shall it (that day) come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." It should be translated, "On all them *that sit*;" τοὺς καὶ θημεύουσ, denoting carnal security.

south (Zech. xiv. 4). "The armies which were in heaven"—that is, all his saints—"follow him," also mounted upon white horses, and clothed in fine linen. Myriads of mighty angels encompass them on every side. But the battle is the Lord's. It is against him they have directed their impotent rage,—it is against him they have madly attempted to wage war (Rev. ix. 19). Therefore his saints and angels shall be spectators, but not participators in the combat. He treads the winepress, "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God," alone (Isaiah lxiii. 3). His foes may flee (Zech. xiv. 4), but in vain; out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, and with it he smites the nations (Rev. xix. 15). The work of vengeance goes on: he treads them in his anger, and tramples them in his fury; their blood is sprinkled on his garments, and all his raiment is stained (Is. lxiii. 1—6). Where is Antichrist and his army now,—they that were so fierce against the Lord of Hosts? Destroyed! (2 Thes. ii. 8.) Cast into the lake of fire and brimstone! (Rev. xix. 20.) Opposition has fallen before him; his foes have licked the dust. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord."

But behold what a shout rends the air. It is a shout which escapes from all the embattled ranks of admiring angels,—from all the awe-struck companies of adoring saints,—it is "the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. xix. 6). From the one end of heaven to the other the sound of praise is heard; one loud long pæan of victory is chanted by innumerable hosts as they witness the glorious termina-

tion of the contest,—a contest in which the prince of the power of the air had striven so desperately to retain his usurped dominion,—a contest in which victory, so oft trembling in the scales, had frequently inclined to the side of Satan, only that immediately afterwards there might be a greater rebound on the side of Christ,—a contest which having now lasted six thousand years had but a little before appeared almost ended in the usurper's favour; this contest is over, this victory is won: the Lord Jesus has triumphed, and angels and saints unite in hymning the Victor's praises: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15).

Jesus is king. On his head are many crowns. The Man-God, the manifested God, is beheld wielding the sceptre of the universe. The throne of this great Son of David is established in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the metropolis of the whole earth; the earth is the metropolis of the universe. Who but God could be adequate to such a government? Jesus is "the mighty God" (Isaiah ix. 6, 7). Who but the God-Man could have accomplished man's redemption? Jesus is man (Heb. ii. 9—16). Jesus is the human God; Jesus is the divine man! Zion, behold your King! This man, this wondrous man, on account of his infinite humiliation, God the Father has exalted. He emptied himself, therefore is he invested with supreme majesty. He bore the cross, therefore he wears the crown. All in heaven, and all on earth, and all under the earth, must bow to him (Phil. ii. 5—12). From the rising to the setting sun his name is great. His reign is peaceful, is blessed. Mark in what glowing language

the prophet Zechariah, in his fourteenth chapter, describes this halcyon, this glorious time. Jehovah Jesus reigns over all the earth: one Jehovah, and his name, that is, his worship, one (verse 9). *Now* blessings everywhere abound. Creation no longer groans; for "there shall be no more curse" (verse 11, and Rev. xxii. 3). There is no more night; for even "at evening time it shall be light" (verse 7). Before, we had seen as through a glass, but now face to face; before, we had only known in part, but now we know even as also we are known. The moon is confounded and the sun ashamed at the dazzling brightness emanating from Jerusalem and its King (Isaiah xxiv. 23). A perennial river, such as was in Paradise, flows through and from the city, the source of joy and plenty to all the world (verse 8). On either side of this river is beheld the tree of life, yielding twelve manner of fruits, and its leaves being intended by the Redeemer for the healing of the nations (Rev. xxii. 2). Now the Feast of Tabernacles is fulfilled: the nations coming up by representatives, like as Israel was wont to come up in the person of her males (verse 16). Passover and Pentecost had previously been fulfilled, but the Feast of Tabernacles, which pointed to the Lord tabernacling with men, could only be fulfilled when the Lord himself had arrived. One more touch does the holy prophet give to this charming picture,—that of abounding holiness (verses 20, 21). What a blessed scene,—the Lord present, and every individual in the world perfectly holy! All things now go on well, for the sceptre is at length in the hands of Him "whose right it is." "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty,

which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned" (Rev. xi. 17).

IX.

JEHOVAH IS KING.

"And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: for, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"—Gen. xxxvii. 6—10.

"God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11.

"He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. iv. 35.) Such was the language of the once haughty, but now astonished, and humbled, and

adoring Nebuchadnezzar, after that God had taught him, by a series of wondrous providences, that the Most High is the real and supreme ruler of the universe. Poor man! when he was engaged in destroying the nations, he had thought he was the hand, whilst he was but the hammer; he had imagined he was the arm, whilst he was but the axe. (See Isaiah x. 5—15.) In the fashioning and establishing of his own kingdom, he had thought he was as it were the statuary, he had now discovered he was but the chisel. His god had been a god of silver and gold, to which he himself, indeed, was vastly superior. But, then, when he began to understand that there was a God in heaven, he attached many of his old pagan notions to that God. He did not at first perceive, that if it was true that such a God did exist, that it was also true that he was supreme, uncontrollable, and omnipotent. Much less did he recognise the fact, that he was ever present, and had a hand in the doing of everything which was done. And, my brethren, is that Babylonian monarch in these respects an isolated individual? Is he the solitary specimen of such profound ignorance? Nay, will Heathendom alone furnish proofs of such wretched mistakes? Alas, no, my brethren, this ignorance is inherent to our fallen nature. Everywhere we behold it. The bare fact of the existence of such meaningless words as chance, and fortune, and luck,* and acci-

* It is a great pity that the Bible itself, through mistranslation, should be made to appear to encourage the use of such words as these, as Psalm cxviii. 26 (Prayer Book version). "We have wished you good luck," &c. No such a word as "luck" exists in the original Hebrew בִּרְכֵנוּכֶם. The authorised version is correct here, "We have blessed you." Though even this version, so good as it undoubtedly is, yet falls at times to catch the idea of the original, as Luke x. 31. "By chance," &c. The Greek is, κατὰ ΣΤΗΝΟΥΣΙΑΝ. "By a coincidence."

dent, is ample evidence that it is common also to ourselves. If God be the God that Scripture represents him to be, then he worketh all things, the most minute and the most magnificent, "after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. i. 11). Then a blind and erring chance cannot interfere, either in commencing, or in carrying on, or in consummating any of his designs. It is quite possible something may occur, which to a careless observer may appear to happen accidentally, and which shall originate and set in motion a chain of circumstances issuing perhaps in something remarkable and important; or which shall alter and make to tend in that direction what previously was tending in this. In either case, however, that seemingly casual occurrence was a part of the plan determined on by the Lord from everlasting, and made to happen, too, at that particular moment of time, and made to issue, also, in that way which his own will decreed. To suppose at all the reverse is mere heathenism. If anything happens by chance, then it MAY partly, or materially, or wholly thwart one of his purposes; and if one, then two, and if two, then twenty-two, yea, all of them. Then his purposes may be frustrated, his will overruled, himself a disappointed God! In other words, God must descend from his throne, and a stupid chance take his place! I repeat, such a supposition is mere heathenism. So the holy Psalmist felt when he gave utterance to his thoughts thus, "Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Psalm cxv. 2, 3). And again, "I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, THAT DID HE IN HEAVEN,

and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places" (Psalm cxxxv. 5, 6). Now these are the testimonies of the Word of God. One loves to breathe such an atmosphere as these sacred words afford, it is such a different one from that of this infidel, God-hating world. The world,—it carries its infidelity to the extremest lengths. It even represents salvation itself as a matter of chance; it ascribes conversion to free will; it represents God as longing to save all sinners, but unhappily without the power to do so, because they themselves will not let him; it makes Christ's blood to have been shed in vain,* as it says, that every

* I fully admit that there are many good men who reject the doctrines of Election and Particular Redemption. Of them I say, they are yet entangled in the meshes of the world. There are others who, whilst admitting the truth of the doctrine of Election, yet maintain Christ died for the whole human race. Now, I frankly own there are several texts of Scripture which *seem* at first sight to prop them up. Such are those which state that Christ died for the "world," and for the "whole world." But how variously is this word used by the sacred writers. For instance, it means in Luke ii. 1, the Roman empire only. Again, in John viii. 26, the "world" means the Jews of Christ's days only. "The world knew him not" (John i. 10); here it refers to unbelievers only. In I John ii. 2, believers only. In Rom. xi. 15, it comprehends unbelieving Gentiles only. In John vii. 7, unbelieving Jews only. In John xvii. 9, the left only. In John i. 29, the elect only. In John iii. 16, it is said, God loved the *world*; in I John ii. 15, we are forbidden to love the *world*: surely it cannot have the same meaning and point to the same people in each of these places. Further, in Rev. xiii. 3, it is said, "*All the world* wondered after the beast," yet some did not receive the badge of Popery. In Rev. xii. 9, it is said, Satan deceives "the whole world;" yet Christ assures us it is not possible to "deceive the very elect" (Matt. xxiv. 24). If I am asked, Why, then, do the sacred penmen, when they point to the persons for whom Christ died, so frequently make use of this and like words? My answer is, If you will carefully mark the tenor of such assertions, you will observe they are made *controversially*. Now, what controversy was there rife in the apostles' days which such words as these would decide? I say, "in the apostles' days," lest any one should think they used these words prophetically, as if to silence the defenders of Particular Redemption. For Holy Scripture never guards itself in this way. Had Christ said, "This represents my body," instead of "This is my body," how much perversion would have been avoided. And yet he did not choose so to do. Well, then, I ask again, what controversy was there in the apostles' days, which language such as "the whole

soul in hell, yea, and Judas Iscariot, *the son of perdition, himself*, Christ died to save, but that his precious death was ineffectual to them for lack of something in themselves; yea, so thoroughly does it

world" would tend to settle? Now, who that has read the New Testament can be ignorant how hard it was to persuade a Jew that the *Gentiles* had any share in the blessings which Messiah was to bring: that even Peter himself required a vision from heaven (Acts x. 15) ere he could look upon Cornelius, a Roman, as his brother? Now, it is my firm conviction, that when the apostles use such expressions as these, they are combating this Jewish idea. Nor is it mine merely. Here is Moses Stuart's admission, made whilst commenting on Heb. ii. 9, who, it should be well remembered, is himself an *Arminian*. These words "are opposed to the Jewish idea, that the Messiah was connected appropriately and exclusively with the Jews. The sacred writers mean to declare by such expressions that Christ died really and truly, as well and as much, for the Gentiles as for the Jews. . . . Nor do they, when strictly scanned by the *usus loquendi* of the New Testament, decide directly against the views of those who advocate what is called a Particular Redemption." Behold the force of truth, which can lead such an *Arminian* to make admissions so fatal to his own theory. That good men, therefore, should inculcate universal redemption, appealing for proof to these passages, I cannot but regret: they are guilty of a pious fraud to remove the offence of the Cross. Besides, they quite overlook all those other statements of Scripture which confine the benefits of Redemption to the people of God alone. Such are the following: "He shall *save his people*" (Matt. i. 21); "My blood shed for *many* for the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28); "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John x. 15); "Christ loved *the church*, and gave himself for it" (Eph. v. 25); He "gave himself for *our* sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal. i. 4); "*Forasmuch* as the *children* are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. ii. 14); "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred," &c. (Rev. v. 9; John xi. 51, 52; and many others.) Again, Christ died "for our sins" (1 Cor. xv. 3). But some men are to be everlastingly punished on account of their sins (Matt. xxv. 41—46). Therefore, Christ did not die for their sins, or else payment is *twice* exacted for the same crimes, and Christ's blood was insufficient. I feel how terrible this would be to me when I came to die, to think that that blood was shed equally for Judas Iscariot and for Voltaire as for me, but that it failed in its effect to them, owing to a lack of something in themselves. One more question I venture to put to those who still maintain this tenet, which I will leave themselves to answer: Whom did Christ represent upon the cross? I am aware some have invented the novel idea that Christ died not for any man, but for sin in the abstract. Now, what is this but a compulsory admission that the *Arminian* view is false, and a lame attempt to get away from the simple truth of God. Christ died for *persons*, as is plain from Heb. ii. 9; Rev. v. 2; Gal. iii. 13; John ii. 21, 22; and many others.

persist in ascribing everything to contingency, that it clings obstinately to the tenet, that *every one* of the jewels of the Redeemer's crown,—those for whom he poured out the last drop of his heart's blood,—that they may all, every one, be finally lost, and heaven be altogether empty. For, my brethren, *if one* may be lost for whom Jesus did all this, and whom he would wish to save but cannot, then surely so may another, and so may any one, and so may all. Yea, more, this infidel world goes further still: it pertinaciously maintains that a man may seek and find the Redeemer,—may hear that Saviour's voice saying in his heart, "Thy sins be forgiven thee, go in peace,"—may be the subject of the Holy Ghost's work for many, many years,—may grow much in grace, in holiness, and in the love of God,—may have been nearly ripened by that Holy Spirit for an eternal weight of glory, and just then, when his work is almost ended, and but a little before God is intending to transplant him to the bosom of his Saviour, that then that individual may do something which shall completely mar and efface the Lord's work, balk the Redeemer of his expected treasure, and be the miserable blasphemer and unhappy victim of God's wrath in the flames of hell for ever. And this it calls the possibility of finally falling away from grace given. I need not put my finger upon any system of religion which teaches all this; you yourselves, if you have at all mingled with the mass of professors of our day, must continually have heard such tenets seriously defended. Contingency! the very idea is wicked. The word of God, you see, speaks very differently. Not only does it *teach* you, in twice five hundred places, that "all that

the Father hath given" to Christ "shall" and must "come to" him (Psalm cx. 3), and that every one of them thus coming Christ will "by no means cast out," and that, of every one of the elect thus given to him from everlasting, and thus drawn to him in due time, not one, not a single one, must on any account be lost, but preserved unto, and raised up at, the last great day (John vi. 37—39); not only, I say, does it teach us all this, but it teaches us that their bodies, and every member of their bodies, is dear to him, yea, that every individual hair of their heads is entered in the books of the eternal covenant (Luke xii. 7).^{*} But you may object, Granted that all concerning the people of God is settled, yet surely every minute thing which happens in the world was not predetermined by God to be done. Indeed! then what sort of a God is your God? The God whom I glory in serving takes as much care in painting so magnificently the wing of a fly as in sustaining the solar system. To have something either beyond or beneath one's notice, is the part of every finite creature; not so with God, who is *infinite*. As one day with him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, so one grain of sand is as a thousand worlds, and a thousand worlds as one grain of sand. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?" Well, look at that odd one; mark it flying from tree to tree,

^{*} See especially Luke xxi. 17, 18. In the verses preceding, Jesus had been declaring how much opposition his people would meet with; then in verse 17 he says, they shall be universally hated. Terrible picture! Surely they have cause now for fear! Surely, if their souls cannot be ruined, their bodies may! Nay, says Christ, not so, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. *But* there shall not *as* hair of your head perish." He that preserved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so that a hair of theirs was not singed in the fire, will also preserve you, if not so miraculously, yet at least as effectually.

and hopping from bough to bough; would you believe that every one of its little rambles God has a hand in, leading it to go where he has predetermined it should go? Look, there it has at last alighted on that little twig; see, it is trying to balance itself; see, it falls, it dies. What if I were to tell you that the exact twig whence it should fall, that the exact moment when it should fall, that all was pre-arranged, that all God had a hand in? That it could not fall one moment before, or one moment after, the time that the Father had determined on? You would perhaps reject it; yet so it is (Matt. x. 29, with Luke xii. 6). Another of you may ask me, Then in every action of every man's life has God a hand? I answer, Undoubtedly. Then you will say, This makes God the author of sin. To this I reply, God can and does do that thing holily which man does wickedly. To refer you again to that chapter which I did a little while ago (Isaiah x.), you there see the Assyrian king destroying nation after nation, and in doing thus merely accomplishing what God would have him do. His motive we find (verses 7, 8) was to gratify his ambition and pride, but this God overruled, in order to punish a nation of hypocrites, and a people against whom he was angry. So, again, it is expressly said, that when Joseph was sold into Egypt, it was not his brethren that sent him there, *but God* (Gen. xlv. 8). That his brethren it was that sold him we well know, and their motive we also know. They envied him, and they hated him, and therefore they sold him. But then, this passage teaches us that God had a hand in that deed of theirs too. But his design was altogether different from theirs. God sent Joseph before his brethren to pre-

serve them a posterity in the earth, and to save their lives by a great deliverance. A more sublime illustration of this truth, in the case of the great Antitype of Joseph, I will bring before you directly; only let these things first sink down into your hearts, that whatever is done in a city, be it evil or righteous, the Lord has a hand in it (Amos iii. 6); and that nothing can happen in the slightest degree, under any circumstances, which shall be contrary to his secret will.

It was undoubtedly to convince Joseph and all his people to the end of time that such is the case, that God, before any remarkable event had happened to this son of Jacob, gave him those two dreams, which you may read in the thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis. Each dream had nearly the same signification as the other, saving only that the second was an expansion of the idea contained in the first. The former dream taught him that he should be so great, that his brethren would feel but too happy in being permitted to bow down before him; the second shewed that he should be so much greater, that not only his equals, but his superiors, yea, and the very father that begat him, should all become vastly his inferiors. But probably, however, the chief design of the doubling of the dream was to shew, as in the two dreams of Pharaoh, that the thing was indeed "established by God," and that God would shortly "bring it to pass" (Gen. xli. 32). Joseph was as naturally ignorant, and as inclined to believe in free will as you and I may be. But here then God * interposed for the enlightenment

* Postquam prima odii semina retulit Moses, nunc altius conscendit, nempe admirabili Dei consilio electum fuisse Joseph ad res maximas, idque somniis fuisse testatum. Somniis autem patefacit Deus quid facturus esset, ut postea sciretur nihil contigisse fortuito, sed quod celesti decreto fixum erat, per flexuosos circuitus demum suo tempore fuisse completum.—Calvin in loc.

of this elect vessel, giving him a map of the future journey of his life, at each station of which was legibly inscribed, "Such is MY will," and whereat he should have abundant reason again and again to raise fresh Ebenezers of gratitude and love, whilst he exclaimed, "Hitherto hath *the Lord* helped me" (1 Sam. vii. 12; Acts xvii. 26).

This truth, my beloved brethren, will receive much additional confirmation, if you remember that all the various circumstances of his life hinge one upon another, link one in another, in so intimate a manner, that if *any one* were withdrawn the whole chain would be broken. Humanly speaking, Jacob and his sons would have died of starvation, and all the magnificent promises made to Abraham and Isaac would have been broken, unless Joseph had been lord of all Egypt, for to him only was granted the wisdom of husbanding the corn in the plenteous years. But Joseph would not have been lord of Egypt, if Pharaoh had not perceived that the Holy Spirit of God dwelt in him, and that he alone was possessed of wisdom adequate to the management of his kingdom in the times which were impending. But Pharaoh would not have perceived this, had he not had two remarkable dreams, and had he not in the morning told them to his courtiers. And even then that information would have been in vain, had not one of those courtiers then present had an opportunity of discovering that Joseph the prisoner was a real Zaphnath Paaneah, a revealer of secrets. And that opportunity he never would have had, unless Pharaoh had been angry with him and put him in prison, and that, too, during the very time that Joseph was there. If that chief butler had had the

dream and been delivered *before* Joseph was put there, or if he had been put in another prison, that opportunity would never have occurred. Yea, if Potiphar, instead of imprisoning Joseph, had slain him or sold him, the issue would have been very different. Or even if Potiphar had had no supposed ground for imprisoning him,—or if his wife had been a chaste woman,—or if Joseph had not been in her eyes a “goodly person and well-favoured,” he would never have been in prison, never have met the chief butler and foretold his restoration to favour, and consequently never could he have recommended him to the king. But the concatenation of circumstances is not told yet. Had the Ishmaelites sold him to *any other* individual in all Egypt, the things which led to his imprisonment would not have taken place. Or had the Ishmaelites not been passing by at the very identical time the brethren of Joseph were in their path, uncertain what to do with the object of their envy,—or if, instead of Ishmaelites, they had been of some other nation,—or if those Ishmaelites themselves had been returning home, or going to some other country than Egypt, nothing of all that befel Joseph there could ever have come to pass. If the Ishmaelites had passed by one day later, Joseph had been slain or starved to death ; if one day earlier, Joseph had not then arrived. Or if he had arrived, had he not told his dreams, his brethren would never have determined to prove his dreams were false. Or if he had told his dreams, had they not hated him, they never would have wished to disprove them. If he had had those dreams *after* they had come from Dothan, his whole after life would have been completely altered. Or if he had not had those

dreams at all, or if his father had treated him just like his other children, his brethren would not have hated him so bitterly. Had *any* one of all the varied events of his life, transpired differently to what it did, Joseph would never have been lord of all Egypt, then famine would have slain his whole family, the Hebrew nation had perished in its infancy, and those ever sweet and precious words, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," had been to this day unfulfilled, and God's promise of the Messiah had been broken, for it was from the Hebrew nation that Christ was to come. Oh, wonderful! My God, I adore thee! Say not, my brethren, that I have entered too much into detail; I like to see such enormous consequences hang on such seemingly trifling incidents,—it makes me again feel that God is in every thing, and that nothing can transpire but what he has pre-ordained. Yea, this is the very point to which I wish to bring you, namely, to convince you that if the most trivial and unimportant thing happens by chance, then also does the greatest, for you have seen the greatest things themselves depend upon the least. Thus, for instance, if Pharaoh had not been angry with his chief butler, Joseph had died a prisoner; or if some one else than Potiphar had bought him, he would never have been in prison at all; in either case he would never have been lord of all Egypt,—*Egypt and the world, the whole of it* (Gen. xli. 56, 57), *together with the family that had the promise of the Messiah, had all died of starvation, and the church had been unredeemed.* I ask then boldly, Was it a chance merely that Pharaoh was angry with that chief butler? Was it through accident that Joseph was

sold to Potiphar? Had chance anything to do with these things, or with the other events of his life? Or, rather, was not an unseen Hand working and controlling all, and bringing all to pass, in the exact order, and in the exact way, which an omniscient Being had eternally predestined? Chance! O airy phantom! O name for nothing! O offspring of natural infidelity! A term sprung from a diseased imagination, which all fact, all reason, and all revelation, unani- mously repudiate! Well, then, did Pope write,—

“ All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good.
And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear; whatever is, is right.”

I am well aware, my brethren, that many strong objections, though chiefly inferential ones, are made against this doctrine; but for my own part, all I care to say in reply to them is, the Scripture plainly and dogmatically teaches this, and therefore if those objections were multiplied a thousand times, and each of them were a thousand times stronger than it is, still they would not altogether weigh one feather with me; God has said it; may I have grace to believe it! To attempt to answer objections in any other manner, would only be to make myself a partaker of their infidelity. May you and I, my brethren, I repeat it, may we learn to rest in the mere *ipse dixit* of God's unerring word.

This truth, my brethren, that nothing is done, or can be done, contrary to the secret will and plan of God, is yet more emphatically and continually insisted

upon in the Scriptures, with respect to the life, and sufferings, and death of Joseph's illustrious Antitype—the Lord Jesus Christ. Was there ever, or could there ever be, a greater sin committed under the wide canopy of heaven, than that which the infuriate Jews committed eighteen hundred years ago, when they killed the Prince of life, and transfixed their Creator himself to the ignominious and cruel cross? Surely if anything can be imagined to have run counter to the will of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, surely this most awful deed must be the one! A sin for which that nation has suffered ever since, and has been scattered to earth's remotest shores! Yet what saith the Scriptures? "Of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for *to do* whatsoever *thy* hand and *thy* counsel DETERMINED BEFORE *to be done*" (Acts iv. 27, 28). Can you, my brethren, bow your hearts to this sublime teaching, without any equivocation or mental reservation whatever? Then thank God for it, for "all men cannot receive this saying" in its simplicity, "save they to whom it is given" (Matt. xix. 11).

But this is not only true with respect to the sufferings of Jesus viewed in the aggregate, but we find that every single event in his life, every kind of opposition he encountered, every single suffering he underwent, every item in the treatment he received, that *all* was pre-ordained and predestined. A decree is issued by the Roman emperor, "that all the world shall be taxed" (Luke ii. 1). What then? that is *nothing* remarkable, say you? Not in itself, indeed;

but then, when that decree is made to subserve God's purposes, that Christ should be born at Bethlehem, it becomes truly so. Had it not been for that decree, Christ had been born in Nazareth, and God's word had been falsified, which declared that Messiah should come from Bethlehem Ephratah (Micah v. 2). But God's will had been declared, and the haughty monarch, utterly unconscious thereof, and intending only to gratify his pride, is made to help on its accomplishment. Then scarcely is the Redeemer born into the world, than men wished to send him out (Matt. ii. 3). But had it been different, had Herod been willing instantly to have become his subject, then that divine word had never been fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." Had he not been zealous to slay the infant Christ, Jeremiah's words concerning Rachel weeping had been but a mere dead letter. Had not Joseph feared when he returned from Egypt, because he heard that Archelaus had succeeded his father, never would he have turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth, never would have been fulfilled that idea so abounding in the prophets, that Christ should be called the lowly and despicable Nazarene.

And it is really wonderful to notice how continually the holy evangelist, after narrating every succeeding incident in the life of Jesus, pauses to add, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet." But you may say, All these things were done, not to fulfil that which was predestined, but only that which was prophesied, and that God prophesied thus and thus because he foresaw that man would act thus and thus. Miserable driveling! which lifts

circumstances, and probabilities, and chances, and men, into the throne of God, and makes his high and holy will succumb to those circumstances, and his knowledge to be dependant on the things known, instead of all things being dependant on Him! And Joseph's dreams, too, then, were given to him just because God foresaw that his brethren would sell him, and that the king of Egypt would pity him, and that Pharaoh could have acted differently if he had pleased. Is there any one here present who thinks so? Unhappy soul, go and learn what that meaneth: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. xxi. 1). To such an one I would say, You have the first principles of the Bible yet to learn. Seek to become a little child, and to receive those pictures of a sovereign God, which such chapters as Romans ix. and Ephesians i. portray.

No, my brethren, "the everlasting covenant," made between the eternal Three, "is ordered *in all things*, and sure" (2 Sam. xxiii. 5). Nothing befel Jesus but what was pre-ordained. The life, the indignities, the sufferings, and death of Jesus, were each and all necessary for the ransom of his beloved church. So he himself said (Luke xxiv. 26), "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" and again (verse 44), "All things *must* be fulfilled which were written concerning me." You see there was a needs-be in them all. So again (verse 46), "Thus it *behoved* Christ to suffer." Hence you observe how much he pressed this truth on the attention of his disciples. And further, each thing happened to him at the very moment God would have it. He was born at the identical time God had

indicated.* He began his public ministry at the very time God† had foretold he should. That ministry of his lasted exactly as long, namely, three years and a half, as God had declared‡ it should. How, ever and anon, did those mysterious words of Christ drop upon the ears of his disciples, "Mine hour is not yet come!" How, when he would go to raise Lazarus, did he not reassure the desponding and timid hearts of his disciples, by enigmatically telling them that the time of the power of darkness had not yet arrived, and therefore nothing could harm them!" (John xi. 9, 10). But when that time agreed upon between his Father and himself, before the worlds were made, had drawn near, how meekly he

* Gen xlix. 10. The sceptre, that is, royalty, was to remain with Judah until the Shiloh, that is, Jesus, came. Now Judah had ever preserved the semblance of royalty, even in the time of the captivity. But within little more than a year after Christ was born, Herod died. Christ was born at the end of the year, A.U.C. 749; and Herod died in the month of March, A.U.C. 751. Then the shadow departed, for the real King had come. Herod had indeed appointed Archelaus his successor, and invested him, by his will, with regal authority, but the emperor Augustus refused to ratify the title, permitting to him only that of *Ethnarch*.

† Dan. ix. 25. Sixty-two prophetic weeks, or weeks of years, viz., four hundred and thirty-four years, were to elapse from the time of the commandment to build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince should be, that is, until he should be manifested as Messiah the Prince. Now, that commandment was given by Artaxerxes, as recorded by Ezra, chap. vii., and was given in the seventh year of that king's reign, *i.e.*, B.C. 409. Now, from 409 B.C. exclusive, to A.D. 26, is exactly 434 years. But was Jesus manifested A.D. 26? Yes, for when the christian era was settled, an error of four years was committed, which added to the twenty-six, make thirty. And Luke says, that it was when Jesus was thirty years of age that he was solemnly inaugurated into his public ministry.

‡ Dan. ix. 27. In the midst of the week, he (Christ) shall cause the oblation to cease. A week, prophetic, is seven years, and it was to be in the midst of that week. This he did by dying on the cross, three years and a half after his solemn inauguration by his baptism. But how did he cause the oblation to cease? Because when the Lamb of God was offered, the Paschal lamb was useless.

looked upwards and said, "Father, the hour is come!" (John xvii. 1.) Then how submissively did he resign himself to his enemies' hands, whilst he exclaimed, "This is your hour" (Luke xxii. 53). *Then*, as his foes could not hurt him before, so cannot they but lay hands on him when his time has come.* They wished to defer his apprehension till the feast of Passover was over; but no, it could not be, for the Lord had determined otherwise (Matt. xxvi. 5). And so their counsels were overruled by the *apparently* casual circumstance of Judas offering himself to them just before the festival. The opportunity appearing too good to lose, they seized it, and in seizing it fulfilled the will of God (Exodus xii. 6). Then was he led to Annas, and Caiaphas, and Pilate, and Herod, and to Pilate again—why? because God had said, "He was taken from prison and from judgment." It was necessary he should be brought before all these, in order that priests and people, church and state, Jew and Gentile, might all have a voice in condemning him. Had he been condemned in a mere tumultuous assembly, or merely by a synod of priests, in either case it would not have had the same weight as the condemnation of Jesus had. But no, one disciple surrendered him, another denied him, the others forsook him, the public teachers of his nation officially rejected him, the people preferred a murderer, the king mocked and ridiculed his pretensions, the Roman governor gave orders for his crucifixion, and Roman soldiers carried his behest into execution,—all had a hand in it; and then, to consummate the whole, as God would have it,

* Luke xxii. 37. "This that is written *must* yet be accomplished, for the things concerning me have an end," that is, "have a fulfilment."

by a wondrous infatuation, that title which they had denied to him whilst he was at liberty, they affixed to his cross when dying: "Jesus, King of the Jews." Was there any chance in this?

Then, look at his sufferings. See how they assumed every aggravated form possible, whether corporeal, or mental, or spiritual. If you look to his corporeal sufferings, you see the thorny crown indented into his sacred head, the barbarous ruffian with a club (Matt. xxvii. 30) beating those thorns deeper down,—you see his back laid bare, his head bent towards the earth, whilst his hands are tied to a post in order to afford a better and surer mark for the cruel scourge which was made of rods of knotted wire,—you see his bones bared, and his dear flesh hanging in tatters from him,—then you see him toiling with his cross up Calvary,—you see the patient sufferer drawn up to the cross with ropes, the nails applied and driven through the tenderest parts of his body,—you discover, from the convulsive looks of his companions in punishment, the intense agony he is enduring, you mark the fevered and tormenting thirst which in consequence assails them,—you remember that men crucified die not through loss of blood or any such thing, but only through constantly increasing and racking pain; that those pains were viewed as so terrible, that their tormentors in pity were wont to give a stupefying draught, but which Jesus, who would drain damnation dry, courageously refused to drink. If you look to his mental sufferings, you find that he was the hapless victim of treachery, of denial, and of cowardice, from professed friends; that he was a prey to those terrible feelings in their full extent, which must have arisen in

his breast from a perfect consciousness of all that was to come upon him (John xviii. 4), which feelings were so keen that they made him sweat great drops of blood; that insult, and mockery, and spitting on (which the Holy Ghost has thought worthy of especial prophecy, Isaiah l. 6), he had to bear; that with the Sanhedrim his words were perverted (Matt. xxvi. 61, with John ii. 19, 21); that with the Roman governor his teaching was misrepresented (John xix. 12); that one robber was chosen in preference to him, and that two others of the gang were crucified with him, as much as to say, This is the king, and these are his subjects: or if you look to his spiritual sufferings, and remember that all hell was let loose upon him (Luke xxii. 53); that he himself had imputatively upon his person the only thing which he ever hated—sin, and not one sin only, but all the sins of all the elect (Isaiah liii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 21); that the justice of God itself was punishing him (Isaiah liii. 4); and that God, seeing his beloved Son thus robed in our sins, turned away his face from him, which was the worst and keenest of all that Jesus had to endure;—when, I say, you look at all this, can you, dare you for a moment think that there was any chance work here? Could the justice of God have allowed ONE SINGLE DROP of all this cup of suffering to have been omitted? Take what you may consider the least of all his sufferings, and reflect seriously,—could that have been omitted? What, when the holy and divine Sufferer himself prayed, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” would God then lay upon Jesus more than was absolutely necessary? Supposing that Pilate, or Caiaphas, or Judas, had believed in Christ, would they

then have crucified him? Surely not. Well, then would they have believed in that, which upon this supposition could never have taken place, namely, in Christ crucified, for these were the very men appointed by God's determinate counsel to put Christ to death! (Acts ii. 23, and iv. 28.) It was in order, then, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, that Judas was a lost soul,—at least, so Christ says (John xvii. 12). It was necessary that Caiaphas and Pilate should be unbelievers, or Christ had not been crucified for us. What room for chance is there in all this?

Once more, if you look to the present and future glories and joys of Jesus, and then remember that these were dependant on his incarnation and sufferings, you will find that that glory and joy which he has now, must be by mere chance also, if *any* of the events of his life or *any* of his sufferings were; or even if they might have happened differently to what they did. But we find that it was God's intention from everlasting in this way to glorify his Son (Psalm ii. 7; Rev. xiii. 8); and in this way, too, to save his elect (Eph. i. 4—7);—I mean, by the eternal Son of God uniting himself with the people given to him, and so enduring all their woes, in order that they might participate in all his joy (Eph. v. 25—32; Matt. xxv. 21). And, therefore, as it was the will of God to glorify Jesus, so it also was the will of God that Christ should suffer (Heb. ii. 10). Harken to the apostle: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and

being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." You will not fail to observe here the successive steps in the humiliation of the Redeemer, each one being dependant on the one preceding, until at last the sacred penman reaches the bottom of the scale when he says, Christ became obedient *unto death*, and that death the death of the cross. Well, what then? "*Wherefore*," continues the apostle, "*Wherefore* God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 5—11). "To the glory of God the Father" is here said to be the single reason of all this wondrous revelation of grace through Jesus Christ. And it is true. God is more glorified by what Christ has done, than by all the worlds he has made. The redeemed church of Christ is a focus wherein more, infinitely more of the glory, grace, wisdom, love, holiness, and power of God meet,—is a divine and eternal monument, where may be seen, and whence may be learnt, more of the glory of God, by an adoring universe,—than in all the other manifestations of God put together (Eph. iii. 10, and ii. 7). And can such a sublime and majestic result be at all, *even in the very least degree*, the work of a blind and erring chance? We feel not. But then God could not have been thus glorified unless Christ had died, for we have seen that was the stepping-stone to the succeeding glory. Yea, more, that glory began at the cross. The moment he

reached the last step in the ladder of humiliation, that moment he began to ascend. Hence his crucifixion itself is called a "lifting up," or elevation (John xii. 32). But he could not have been crucified unless Pilate had condemned him; nor would Pilate have condemned him if he had not been compelled to do so by the priests. But the priests would not have had him in their power at all unless Judas had betrayed him; and Judas would not have betrayed him unless he had been the son of perdition; nor especially at the particular time which we have shewn God had pre-ordained, unless he had been shamed before his fellow-disciples for murmuring at the lavish anointing of Mary (compare John xii. 4, with Matthew xxvi. 8 and 14). So that there is a real and intimate connexion between the present greatness of the Mediator Jesus, and the salvation of the church through him, with such a seemingly trifling circumstance as the sister of Lazarus anointing his feet with spikenard. If Judas had not been present on that occasion, his heart had not betrayed his love of money and his hatred of his Master; then he had not been reprov'd for his unseasonable parsimony; and then he had not gone out so speedily, boiling with rage, to the chief priests; his plans had been more maturely weighed, his betrayal deferred, and Christ, the real Paschal Lamb, had not been offered up on the feast of Pass-over; God's word had been broken, and Daniel's prophecy unfulfilled. Brethren in Christ, I feel we may well adopt the language of Zophar: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" (Job xi. 7.) Our proper position, when we reflect upon all this, is—down in

the dust, whilst we exclaim with the adoring Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" *Οτι εκ αυτου, και δι αυτου, και εις αυτον*,—"for FROM him, and BY him, and TO him (i. e., "for his glory," Rev. iv. 11), are all things. To him," then, "be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. xi. 33, 34, 36.)

Brethren, when you retire to your chambers adopt Acts iv. 24—28, as the expression of your own grateful and adoring hearts to God. Care not for the opinions of the world. Embrace, in all their simplicity, the doctrines of the word of God, and seek that they may influence your hearts and lives.

"A king, and not to reign! Preposterous thought!
 A God, and not a king! Strange Deity!
 Such are the Pagan gods, such is not mine;
 I own, adore, and love the mighty God,
 Whose will controls all worlds, whose high decrees
 Fix bounds to time, and destiny to souls.
 He took my nature, guilt, and shame, unasked,
 He gave me righteousness and life unsought.
 He bows, he melts, he hardens whom he will,
 Nor of his matters gives account to man."

IRONS.

X.

THE SAVIOUR OF THE BRETHREN.

"Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls."—Acts vii. 14.

"And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded."—Gen. xlvii. 11.

One of the blessed employments of a happier time, my beloved friends, when we are gathered together around our Father's throne, will doubtless be to hear our brethren narrate all the way in which the Lord their God brought them; to hear them tell of their past troubles, the sense of desolation which they experienced in their souls when all things seemed against them, the struggle which they had to encounter with the natural unbelief of their hearts, and then to hear them recount the manner of God's appearing, and the mode in which he delivered them. Something of that future pleasure the sacred word even now administers to us, when it sets before us the lives of some of God's tempted ones, and traces out the chequered path in which they trod. They, we observe, trusted in God and were holpen. Their deliverances encourage us. They lead us oftentimes to exclaim, "Yes, indeed, God is

the protector of his people." What child of God can read, for instance, of David seated on the undisputed throne of Israel, his enemies on all sides being subdued, and not feel emotion as he recalls the time when the same David wandered about a proscribed outcast, and gave utterance to the deep anguish of his spirit in those despairing words, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul"? (1 Sam. xxvii. 1.) Or, again, when he reads of Jacob, surrounded by all his family, fondly embracing his long lost son, can he avoid feeling some kind of grateful and sympathising joy as he remembers that this is the same Jacob who shortly before had moaned so piteously, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me"? When, once more, he beholds Joseph lord of all Egypt, beloved by king, courtier, and peasant, does he not feel it a pleasant employment to picture again the time when that same Joseph dwelt a hapless youth in his paternal tent,—when his cheek turned pale and his heart fluttered as he heard the approaching footsteps and rough voices of his jealous brethren,—when his heart sunk within him as he marked their countenances fall whilst they listened to the story of his dreams,—when terrified they led him to the pit,—when almost overwhelmed with grief he was exposed for sale in the slave-market,—when his brightened prospects were suddenly overclouded as the prison doors of the cruel Potiphar closed upon him,—when it became apparent that the chief butler had forgotten him? Oh, yes, the contrast is so extreme and striking, the deliverance is so remarkable, the divine faithfulness is so very evident, that, with the blessing of the Holy Spirit, he cannot but derive great comfort

therefrom. Yes, God has appeared; Joseph is exalted. But one more item to his joy remains to be added,—his brethren and his father he must have with him, and then all is accomplished; God's promises to him are fulfilled.

Although, during all the seven years of plenty, we do not find that Joseph made one single effort to see his brethren, yet doubtless he had not forgotten them. Although they knew it not, he was busily engaged in their behalf. He knew that the famine was to be in all the world, and that they would feel its effects as well as others. It was "expedient," therefore, that he should be separated from them for a time, and consequently he submitted. He was confident he should behold them again,—his dreams portended as much,—and therefore in quiet simple faith he waited on the Lord. That Lord had been his friend hitherto; he felt he would continue to be.

At length the plentiful years have passed. The granaries of Joseph are filled. The famine approaches. Dismay seizes all nations. Want stares Israel's family in the face. They are involved in the same distress as their neighbours around. In their need they "look" ominously "one upon another." A report reaches them that there is corn in Egypt. This is soon confirmed by various individuals whom they encounter, who are returning thence with their heavily loaded camels. Loud are their praises of Egypt's beneficent and potent minister. At length, impelled by necessity, and urged by Jacob, they also direct their faces southward. They set out. Ah! little do they know that they are bending their steps towards their ill-treated brother. Little are they aware that the lord of the

land is longing to behold *them*, and that it is solely on their account he himself daily presides in the hall where the distribution of corn to foreigners is made. After some days, Canaan is behind them. Their route now lies through the wilderness of Shur. On and on they proceed, until at length the first Egyptian village meets their eager eyes. They quickly learn where the viceroy is to be seen, and rejoice at the news they hear of the facility of obtaining access to him. As they near the metropolis, the more numerous do the caravans become, so that they have only to follow in the stream. But now they are within sight of an immense pile of building, which they rightly conclude to be one of the great storehouses. Perceiving an inn adjacent, they rest and leave their asses there. On the morrow, following a crowd, they soon enter a spacious hall, where at the further end is beheld the lord of the land seated on a throne, surrounded by his ministers and prefects. On either side, the stewards and treasurers are busily engaged, some in selling the corn, others in receiving the money: whilst ever and anon the buzz of voices is hushed, and every ear is attentive as any direction is given from the throne. They draw nearer; behind them are many anxious faces awaiting their turn,—passing beside them are beheld numbers of joyful countenances. And now they approach the throne and prostrate themselves before—*their brother*. Joseph recognises them; he lifts the eye of gratitude to God, as he beholds them unconsciously fulfilling his dreams, and then determines on the execution of a plan long previously matured, whereby he will endeavour to bring them to a sense of *their* heinous guilt. Feigning to be alarmed at their

number, and assuming a haughtiness and an anger which he is far from feeling, he charges them with being spies, and notwithstanding their assertion that they are all the sons of one man, he appears to disbelieve it, reiterates his charge, and orders them to be conducted to prison. Three days they spend there in terrible anxiety. They are aware what punishment the law of nations has decreed to spies, they remember the angry frown with which he surveyed them, and so every moment of that anxious time they are expecting to be led to execution. On the third day they are again summoned into his presence, nor does he at all mitigate their anxiety, when he declares his resolve that until they produce their younger brother, he will detain one of them a prisoner. Through the mercy and grace of God, his rough treatment has its intended effect. The deaf ear which he turns to all their representations reminded them of how, twice eleven years before, they had continued inexorable to the entreaties and the tears of their affectionate brother. Ignorant that he understands their language, as he speaks to them by means of an interpreter, they acknowledge to one another the enormous crime which they had then committed (Gen. xlii. 21). How different was their behaviour now to the calm and off-hand manner with which they had previously informed him of the death of one of their number. Now they acknowledge they are "guilty concerning their brother," yea, that they are murderers. Joseph, thankful for the evidence of the change which he discerns, turns from them and weeps, and then, in accordance with his resolution, he releases the others, having first bound Simeon before their eyes. Possibly Simeon exhibited the least ap-

pearance of contrition, or probably he had been the most cruel and determined at the pit. For Joseph, in his treatment of his brethren, cannot be wholly excused. Certainly in this particular the Antitype infinitely transcends him. Jesus cannot behave unkindly towards us. His heart is *all* love. True, he may and does make use of affliction to bring us to our senses and our knees, but it is always sent in the *purest* love, it never has caused, or shall cause, *one unnecessary pang*. But to proceed.

The brethren now begin to turn their thoughts and faces homewards, and depart. By Joseph's order their sacks have been well filled with corn, whilst their money has been restored and put in their sacks' mouths. On their way, one of them having occasion to open his sack discerns his money, which tends greatly to increase their anxiety and consternation. At length, they reach Canaan and their father's tent, but when they perceive that the money of each has been designedly returned, their hearts misgive them, further troubles already appear to loom in the future. To Jacob they unfold all that has befallen them, and tell him of the solemn warning with which they were dismissed; who, when he hears that Benjamin must be presented to the viceroy ere a further supply is granted, peremptorily refuses to let him go, and then gives vent to that paroxysm of grief and despair, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me."^{*}

^{*} How unfavourably for Jacob does this despair of his contrast with Abraham's confidence and faith in God. For Jacob, with twelve sons, mourned in the bitterness of his soul over his imaginary bereavements, *dis-trusting* God; whilst he that had received the promises, "offered up his only begotten son" at the Lord's command (compare Gen. xiii. 36, with Heb. xi. 17). Oh! for faith,—simple, strong faith.

Poor old man, he has not yet forgotten his loss of Joseph !

But the provision which Joseph had sent, although ample, was not inexhaustible. He had granted, freely granted, all that his brethren had desired to purchase,—namely, sufficient for a year. But that time has now expired, and their stock is nearly consumed. The famine is as severe the second year as it had been the preceding one. Accordingly Jacob directs his sons to bend their steps again towards Egypt, and after much mental struggle, at their earnest importunity, he consents to their taking Benjamin with them, Judah becoming responsible for his safe return. Presently they arrive in Egypt and stand before Joseph. Benjamin is with them. Not one is missing. He would have them *all* bow the knee to him. God had promised him they should do so. He desires not a mere prostration of the body, he wants them all reconciled to him, in order that their own happiness, as well as his, may be thereby consummated. He is longing to embrace them, comfort their hearts, banish their fears, and witness the last sparks of their envy and ill-will swallowed up in penitential tears, fond love, and wondering gratitude. Beholding them now again before him, he proceeds with the execution of the plan which, a year ago, he had begun to act upon. By his orders the steward invites them to an entertainment in his palace. They, bewildered and terrified at such remarkable and extreme condescension, imagine some plot is being laid for their ruin. Ah ! they are unhappy ! Conscience is busy ! How many, many times lately, have they not regretted their selling of Joseph ! How many times have they not recalled his imploring,

innocent face, the tears which sparkled in his eyes, as he sought to melt them to pity. The steward assuages their terrors as well as he can, and produces Simeon. Presently Joseph arrives. He enquires after the welfare of his father with a voice so trembling with emotion, and with such forced composure, as might well have excited the attention of his brethren had they been at all suspicious. "Is your father well," says he, "the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?" But when he beholds his brother Benjamin, a young man of about three and twenty summers, but whom he had never seen since that brother was a babe in arms, he can scarcely restrain his feelings. His own brother!—the thought is almost too much for him! His nicely arranged design is wellnigh being dashed to the ground, so intensely does he yearn to fold his brother in his arms. And is Benjamin altogether a stranger to this emotion? Does not his heart in some degree assist his senses? Was he altogether calm and impassioned? Is it possible that the tie which nature binds around our hearts can be entirely dissevered by anything save death? Is there not at this moment a mysterious, an indescribable something, which leads him, however unconsciously, to regard Joseph in another light than *merely* as "lord of Egypt"? But now the entertainment proceeds: "they set on," for Joseph by himself, for his brethren "by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which eat with him, by themselves." His wondering brethren are placed according to seniority; Benjamin, however, throughout the feast, being treated with the most marked distinction. At length, the day begins to decline. How differently has the time been spent to

what their fears suggested! The sun having set, Joseph instructs the steward to dismiss the men on the morrow, after that he has filled their sacks with corn, and put his silver cup in Benjamin's sack. Early in the morning the men depart. The plot nears completion. Ere they have proceeded far from the city, the steward, by Joseph's direction, overtakes them, and charges them with stealing the cup.* They, bold in the consciousness of innocence, unanimously condemn him to death who shall be found guilty of the theft. Their sacks are promptly opened, when, lo, just as the men are beginning to look

* Calvin on Gen. xliv. 5, remarks, "Varie exponitur hoc. Quidam enim ita accipiunt, quasi Joseph consultos a se artilos simulet, ut furem cognosceret. Alii autem vertunt, in quo tentando tentavit vos, vel rimando rimatur. Alii, quod scyphus subreptus quasi sinistrum omen fuerit ipsi Joseph. Mihi tamen videtur genulius esse sensus ille: quod scypho ad divinationes et magicas artes usus fuerit: quod tamen finxisse diximus augendi invidiæ causâ. Sed exoritur questio, quomodo sibi permittat Joseph tale figmentum. Præterquam enim quod auguria profiteri illi nefas fuit, perperam et indigne cælestis gratiæ laudem transfert ad dæmonia. Prius negabat se idoneum fore somni interpretem, nisi quatenus veritatem Deus suggereret: nunc totum illud gratiæ Dei elogium obliterat: et quod deterius est, magum se jactans pro Dei propheta, imple profanat Spiritus sancti donum. Certe in hac simulatione graviter eum peccasse negandum non est. Ego tamen sic sentio, modis omnibus quoad potuit, initio conatum esse, suum asserere Deo honorem: ac minime per eum stetisse quin totum Ægypti regnum cognosceret, illum non magicis artibus, sed cælesti dono excellere tanta solertia. Verum quia magorum præstigiis assueti erant Ægypti, prævaluit vetustus error, ut Joseph alium esse crederent, nec dubito quin rumor ille in plebe vagatus sit: quamvis illo repugnante et invito. Nunc quum se extraneum hominem fingat Joseph, uno contextu multa mendicia involvens, vanam hanc opinionem à vulgo metuat, quod auguria captet. Unde colligimus, ubi semel quispiam a recta linea deflexit quam proclivis sit in varia peccata lapsus. Quare hoc exemplo moniti, discamus nihil nobis permittere nisi quod scimus Deo probari. Præsertim vero cavenda est omnis simulatio, quæ noxias imposturas vel parit vel confirmat. Deinde monemur, non sufficere si quis se ad tempus opponat exorienti vitio: nisi accedat constantia ad resistendum, quantumvis ebulliat. Nimis enim leviter defungitur, quia semel testatus sibi displicere quod malum erat, postea suo silentio vel conniventia quoddam assensus signum præbet." To these words I venture to add, Behold the danger of a long course of prosperity. Whither has departed the first love of Joseph himself?

triumphantly at the steward, the cup is at last discovered in Benjamin's sack. A cry of horror escapes from each; consternation is depicted on all their countenances. In an agony of grief they rend their clothes and return to the city. Benjamin is silent; he perceives that to attempt to acquit himself would be worse than useless. Soon they are again in the presence of Joseph, who is now attended by his ministers and guards. Looking angrily at them, he reiterates the charge of his steward. They all offering to become his slaves, Joseph feels the crisis has arrived. All is at last ready. The opportunity of discovering the sincerity of their repentance for their cruelty towards himself, and of their love towards his brother Benjamin,—the opportunity for which he had been so long and so skilfully preparing,—this opportunity is at length present. He declares that it would be unjust in him to punish all for the guilt of one, and so Benjamin he orders to be detained a prisoner, while to the others he gives permission to return home. How oppressed is his heart with anxiety as he pronounces this sentence. Have his efforts to subdue their hatred proved ineffectual? Will they consent to his decision without a struggle to save Benjamin! His anxiety is only for a moment. As he proceeds, their countenances, expressive of extreme anguish, plainly evidence how painful his words are to them. Scarcely has he finished, when Judah, Benjamin's surety, steps forward, and in a speech replete with pathos and affection for his father and brother, generously offers to be bound instead of the supposed culprit. This speech is inimitable. It is a perfect pattern of natural eloquence. It is so delicately tender, it is so powerfully impressive, that I

am constrained to request you will now turn to the word of God and read it entire. You will find it in Gen. xliv. 18—34. Who could resist such an appeal? What heart could be steeled against it? How was it possible that Joseph could any longer appear insensible or act the foreigner? And there, too, stand the other brethren around the speaker, whose imploring eyes, and faces pale with terror, plainly demonstrate that Judah's every word, yea, and noble offer too, are echoed back again from the very bottom of each of their hearts. Who can doubt any longer whether they are repentant of their former jealousy and cruelty? Joseph is quite overcome, and, with a voice choking with emotion, he bids all his attendants retire. They, awed, obey. Scarcely has the last disappeared, when Joseph's surcharged heart is relieved by a flood of tears. His brethren have no time for wonder: for, rising from his throne, his countenance beaming with affection towards them, whilst sobs struggle to impede his utterance, he says, "I am . . . Joseph; . . . doth my . . . father . . . yet . . . live?" His terrified brethren hear, but are at a loss what to reply. They hear "Joseph," and "my father;" and oh, what thoughts pass through their minds as these words strike upon their ears! They start as if electrified;—"Joseph,"—that single word is sufficient: no stranger could have thought of mentioning that word now. "And is it really Joseph?" think they; and they remember his dreams, and remark their fulfilment. "And is it Joseph?" they ask themselves; "how has it come to pass that he is lord of Egypt? How will he behave towards us?" "Yes, it is Joseph," they half exclaim, as they trace the lineaments of their long lost

brother in the viceroy's face. "*Joseph?*" they ask themselves again; but they have no time for reflection, as a voice, now undisguised and which they well remember, is heard, saying, "Come near to me, I pray you." Almost involuntarily they draw near. Again he speaks: "I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." Perceiving their agitation, and Judah attempting to speak, but unable to do so, whilst amazement, fear, joy, and amazement again, are each in their turns visible in their countenances, he continues: "Now, therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." And then he informs them of the five years of famine yet to come, and bids them hasten homewards to fetch their father, in order that they may all dwell near him in Egypt, in the best of the land,—the land of Goshen. Then coming close to them, he at length gratifies the long restrained desire of his heart, he falls upon his brother Benjamin's neck "and weeps;" and Benjamin "weeps upon his neck." Oh! happy, happy time! Those tears which he sheds over his brother are tears of affection and of joy. Joseph is happy now that he has Benjamin; and Benjamin is happy now that he has found Joseph. "Moreover," he kisses "all his brethren and weeps upon them." Which of them can doubt now whether Joseph has forgiven them, as each feels his warm, his fond embrace? Their fears are quite dispelled,—dispelled by his love. True, they had hated him,—true, they had sold him; but he has forgiven them, he loves them, and they, they cannot longer help it, they love him. Now they are at ease, his kindness encourages them to look him boldly in the

face and call him brother. Now they can calmly listen to the wondrous story of his servitude, of his imprisonment, and of the cause and occasion of his present exaltation. Now they can freely converse with him. And, oh, communion with their forgiving, loving brother, how sweet it is! How pleasantly the moments fly! They had hoped to wring some little compassion, perhaps, from the stern viceroy; but little did they anticipate so gracious a reception as they have met with,—and that, too, O wonder of wonders, from Joseph their brother! Soon the news of the arrival of Joseph's brethren reaches the royal palace, and highly pleases the monarch and his courtiers. It may seem strange at first that none of the king's attendants felt any jealousy of these new comers; but then, when we reflect how extremely Joseph must have been loved by every Egyptian, the strangeness disappears. They would love his brethren for Joseph's sake. Pharaoh reiterates the command which Joseph had already given for his brethren to fetch their father, and directs that wagons shall be furnished them in order to assist them in their migration to the land of their brother. Specially Joseph is to enjoin them to disregard and leave behind them any property which may belong to them in their own country, assigning as a reason that the good of all the land of Egypt is theirs (Gen. xlv. 20). These instructions of his generous and grateful sovereign Joseph gladly executes, and gives his brethren abundance of provision and new apparel. Then, eyeing them significantly, he says, "See that ye fall not out by the way," and so dismisses them. And, dear friends, as they wend their way homewards, and once again quit that city in

which such strange events have befallen them, surely they cannot help contrasting the anxiety and grief to which, as they formerly passed along that road, they were the prey, with the joy and comfort of which they are the subjects now. Then their thoughts revert to their father, and one exclaims, "Ah, he little knows the good news we have in store for him." "Probably," says another, "he is fearing we shall return without Benjamin; instead of which, we shall bring him tidings of Joseph as well." "Joseph!" say they, "lord of all Egypt! who ever could have imagined this? Well, the God of our fathers has *not* forsaken him. He *has* fulfilled his word to him!" "How cruel was that wife of Potiphar!" one remarks. And then another adds, "Yes, but how much more cruel were we!" "Ah!" chimes in a third, "that was why he cautioned us to beware of quarreling on our way. He thought we should be angry with ourselves, and with one another, for selling him!" "To think," says Simeon, "that his imprisoning me was only to make us feel how cruel we had been to him!" "And that when he put the cup in my sack," continues Benjamin, "it was to discern whether you cared for me, and loved me!" "Well," observes Judah, "he has been kind to us!" "He has! he has!" escapes from them all. "Truly, he is a good brother!" Their journey is a rapid and a pleasant one. Soon they near Canaan and the valley of Hebron. Yonder is Jacob coming to meet them. He descries Benjamin, and is happy. His sons, having presently come up with him, each more eager to be the bearer of the glad tidings, than considerate of its effects upon him, gather round him and declare, "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of

Egypt." The news proves almost too much for the poor old man, it is so astounding and so fraught with joy. But having listened to their story, and beheld the wagons which were sent to carry him, the almost forgotten dreams of his child recur to his mind, and he is convinced of the truth of their declarations. With a grateful, humbled spirit, he recognises how God has been better to him than his fears suggested, and exclaims, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."

No long time elapses ere, agreeable to the mandate of the king, they all depart from Hebron to spend the rest of their lives in the land over which Joseph rules. God had declared to Abraham that the Amorites were to possess the land of Canaan for four hundred and thirty years more, ere his seed succeeded to the inheritance. It is worthy of observation here, as helping to prove how little chance directed these matters, that now *exactly* one half of that time had expired.* At Beersheba the Lord appears to Jacob, and encourages him in his leaving the promised land with the solemn assurance that he will bring his family back again to it. It was necessary that Jacob should go to Egypt in order that the glory of God might be manifested. The Israelites were not destined, by gradually multiplying, to obtain the land quietly and silently. God was determined to give it them in a

* In round numbers 400 years (Gen. xv. 13—16), but more exactly, 430 years (Gal. iii. 17). Now, from the call of Abraham to the birth of Isaac was 25 years, from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob was 60 years, and Jacob was 130 years old when he went down to Egypt: $25 \text{ years} + 60 + 130 = 215$ years. Two hundred and fifteen years afterwards, the Lord, faithful to his promise, brought up Israel from Egypt: $215 \text{ years} + 215 = 430$ years (See Exodus xii. 40—42).

more public and authoritative manner. Many and great difficulties and dangers were to stand between them and it, in order that his high hand and his outstretched arm might be apparent in their removal. Therefore does the providence of God lead Jacob into Egypt. The number and the names of all his family that come with him are furnished us in Genesis, chapter forty-six, in order that we may see that *each and all whom Joseph sent for safely arrived*. NOT ONE IS MISSING. Joseph quickly hears that his family have arrived in Egypt, and hastens to Goshen to meet them. Oh, what a meeting now takes place! The sound of the viceroy's chariot wheels is heard, the car dashes on, Jacob looks up and beholds *one* seated therein, and, O joy, it is his Joseph! Soon are they locked in each other's arms. Happy Joseph, 'tis well a flood of tears relieves thy bursting heart! Happy Jacob, thou embracest thy long-lost son! Why dost thou say to him, "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive"? Know, thou art to dwell with Joseph in Goshen as long as he dwelt with thee in Canaan! Now, O ye once afflicted souls, is not God a faithful, a dear, good God? Has aught of his promise failed to thee, O Joseph? Did one trouble which was not necessary for thy present welfare,—did one such cross thy path? If the Lord, O Jacob, did remove thy child from thee formerly, was it not in order that he might be restored to thee at this blissful time? Now, O all ye threescore and ten* souls, behold your

* Genesis xli. 27, states the number to be seventy. Acts vii. 14, gives the number seventy-five. This seeming discrepancy arises from the different modes of reckoning adopted. "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, all the souls were threescore

brother in all his glory! The kings of the earth, ye see, are sustained by his bounty! His smile, ye behold, diffuses happiness on every side! O God, how marvellous are thy ways!

All at length being comforted and rejoiced, every tear being wiped away, Joseph takes six of them,—his father and five of his brethren,—as the representatives of them all, and conducts them into the palace and presence of Pharaoh. As for them, they tremble not to encounter the king's gaze; they remember the kind orders which he has already given respecting them; and are encouraged by the consciousness that his favourite is their own Joseph. The monarch beholds them with delight. For a long time had he desired more amply to reward his faithful servant: at last it is in his power. To behave generously towards them,—the family of the man to whom he was so deeply obliged,—whilst it will yield himself the most exquisite pleasure, will at the same time be the very way in which he can most effectually mark his approbation of his services. He converses, therefore, most freely with them, welcomes them most cordially, and assigns the best of the land unto them. They spend the rest of their days in peace, in glory, and in bliss: which bliss they feel is

and six." Well, then,

To this	66	
Add Jacob and Joseph	2	
Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph's two sons ..	2	
	<hr/>	
	70	(Gen. xlv. 27).
	<hr/>	
To this	66	
Add Jacob's sons nine wives, for the wives of		
Judah and Simeon were dead (Gen. xxxvii.		
12; and xlv. 10)	9	
	<hr/>	
	75	(Acts vii. 14).
	<hr/>	

consummated by the constant presence and ever watchful care of their once rejected, but now profoundly loved and willingly obeyed JOSEPH.

Such, dear friends, is the marvellous issue of the story of Joseph. Having accompanied him all through his troubles, you now witness their glorious termination. God, you see, has indeed been with him. His king has delivered, has exalted, him. All power in Egypt and in the world is given unto him. Everywhere his word is law. A starving world subsists upon his bounty. His brethren are safe with him; his home is their home, his honour is their honour, his smile is their delight. I venture, therefore, now to ask you, do you not perceive that

A GREATER THAN JOSEPH IS HERE?

Jesus knows what affliction is, as you have seen, but God was with him, as you have also seen, and has delivered him out of all his troubles, and seated him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. That God alone who exalted Jesus being excepted, all things else in the wide universe are subjected to his sway (1 Cor. xv. 27). The highest intelligences of heaven obey his every behest with alacrity and joy. Worlds more numerous than are the sands upon the sea-shore depend entirely upon him. His stoutest enemies quail at the bare mention of his name. This greatness is his as Mediator, and he is equal to it, for he is God. But some timid soul may say, "Ah, Jesus has indeed arrived at the very zenith of greatness; but I fear lest that supreme majesty with which he is invested may cause him to forget me!" Forget you! how can he? He has still that same divine love which led him *to become man in your behalf*, he still retains that

same warm and affectionate heart which he possessed when he trod this earth. It was in love to you, and me, and all his brethren, that he consented to become Mediator. It is on their account he still exercises that office, and wields that universal sceptre (2 Cor. iv. 15; 1 Cor. iii. 21). In love to his brethren, and in order that he might be in all things like unto them, he took their nature, and still does, and ever will, retain it: and think you that time has chilled that love, or that change of place has changed him? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). He never will be satisfied until each and all his brethren,—every soul that was given to him, and for whom he shed his blood,—until every one of them has been brought to his home, to dwell in the mansion prepared for him, and to be with him for ever (John vi. 39). Listen to his words, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am" (John xvii. 24). "Ah," you reply, "that may be true; still I fear I am not one of those elect." Indeed! who told you so? Have you ascended into heaven, searched all through the book of life, and discovered that your name was not enrolled there? Has an angel from heaven told you so? If this be the case, let him be accursed (Gal. i. 8). Is it declared in any one single page, chapter, or verse, of the word of God, that you are not elect? *If* it is, you may well despair. But it is not. On the contrary, God does, in many passages of his word, assure you that you belong to Christ. For instance (Psalm cx. 3), "*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.*" No man, by nature, is willing to be saved in Christ's way. This is proved from the words, "*shall be willing*," in

which it is implied that the people of Christ, until he exerts his almighty "power," are unwilling. But it is said, they "shall be willing." Now, I do not ask you whether you have grace or not, for most probably if I did, you would reply, "I have not." But I ask, are you not *desirous* of grace? Are you not *willing* for Christ to be your Brother, Husband, Priest, and King. Now, your answer is, "Yes, that I am!" Who made you thus "willing," when God himself asserts that once you were not willing? Who are they that are made willing? "Thy people," says God to his Son; Christ's people, his brethren, his elect. Therefore, then, you are one of those happy souls, and the work which God hath begun in your heart, he will carry on (Phil. i. 6). It is such as you he calls, to such as you his gracious invitations are directed. "Whosoever *will*," says he, "let him take the water of life freely." And God's biddings are enablings, as our Reformers were wont to say. Yea, more. It is plain to me that you, poor timid soul, love Jesus. You said you were afraid he would forget you. You still say you fear he will not pity you; for you are *so very* hard-hearted, so very vile! Now, although I admit there is much unbelief in that fear of yours, yet still I affirm that it is manifest from your words that you love Jesus. "I love Jesus!" you reply, "I wish I did." Exactly! Now, whence does that longing after Jesus proceed, but from love to him? If you did not love him, you would hate him, and your language would be, "Depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." If you did not love him, you would never feel any anxiety that he should love you. To long for Jesus to be thy Saviour and thy Brother, thy heart must have been

touched, thine eyes must have been, at least, partially opened. Now tell me, would you not gladly give up anything, if you thought by retaining it you offended Christ? You feel you would. And is not that love indeed? And is not that a proof that Christ regards thee with a tender eye and a loving heart. "We love him because he first loved us." And to be afraid because you are hard-hearted, implies that you are not so hard-hearted as you imagine. But however desperate your case may be, ever remember that the Son of Man came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10).

Oh, dear friends, what a wretched state we are all in by nature! We are "hateful, and hating one another" (Titus iii. 3). Our hearts are "enmity against God" (Rom. viii. 7; James iv. 4). Not one is better than another. Every saint in heaven once hated Christ. Every one of his brethren is by nature in arms against him. There is not among them a single Reuben (Gen. xxxvii. 22),—I mean, not one who feels any affection for him until his heart is changed. Still Jesus loves them, and is determined to bring them all to love him. His grace is free,—his grace is almighty. Who can tell but that *you*, wretched pleasure-lover,—*you*, miserable worldling,—*you*, poor unbeliever,—yes, even you, shall be brought to Jesus, forgiven and saved? His grace has arrested many equally as unlikely as yourself. Abraham the idolater (Joshua xxiv. 2), Lot the incestuous, David the adulterer and murderer, Magdalene the harlot, the dying thief, Bunyan the swearer, Newton the blasphemer, Scott the Socinian, are all before the throne of Christ. Read the first ten verses of the

thirty-third chapter of the second book of Chronicles, and you will see what a wretch Manasseh was; and yet grace subdued him, and now he stands in heaven a monument of sovereign mercy. Paul set out to Damascus a persecutor of Christ; before, however, he had arrived there, he had cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" I tell you, then, that if you are within the folds of the everlasting covenant, if you are one of the Redeemer's brethren, however estranged from him you may be at present, yet when his time of converting you has come, you, even you, shall be brought to your senses and your knees. Some he calls to the knowledge of himself in the first hour, some in the third, some in the sixth, some in the ninth, yea, and some in the eleventh hour of their lives. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb (Luke i. 15). The thief alluded to above was led to cry for mercy but a short time before he died (Luke xxiii. 42). *Thou* art twenty years old, and *thou* art thirty, and *thou* sixty, and *thou* seventy, —and has not grace changed thy heart yet? What if it should pass over thee, and thou wert left to reap the condign punishment of thy sins! Oh, terrible thought! Then cry mightily to God for mercy: "ask and it *shall be given* YOU; seek and YE *shall find*; knock and it *shall be opened unto* YOU." God will give his Holy Spirit to every one in the wide world that asks him for it (Luke xi. 9—13). Not a single applicant for mercy shall be rejected. Not one that comes to Jesus will he cast out (John vi. 37). Jesus cast out a poor, seeking sinner! It is quite *foreign* to his nature. He *will* receive him, he *will*

embrace him, he *will* forgive him fully, freely, and for ever. *This* is the great purpose for which God has exalted him to be the Prince and Saviour, namely, "to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins" (Acts v. 31). Hast thou, then, a hard heart? Go to Jesus; he can soften it, he can change it, and he *will*, if thou dost ask him (Ez. xxxvi. 26).

But, further, it would be useless for Jesus to wait until sinners sought him. If he were, not one human soul would care to ask him for mercy. He must seek us first; for until he does, we remain "*dead* in trespasses and sins." No man can come to Christ until he is drawn. This Christ himself declares (John vi. 44). Hence, now, by his Holy Spirit, he touches the heart of one sinner, and now of another. The means which he uses is invariably his own word* (1 Peter i. 23), and generally the preaching of that word (1 Cor. i. 21). This means may appear very simple, considering the sublime end to be effected; but, my brethren, whenever God is pleased to make use of means, they are ever found to be simplicity itself. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host

* We hear much in our day about Baptismal Regeneration. I feel it my duty here to warn all of believing this dogma. I believe it has ruined as many, if not more, souls, than any other heresy that Satan has brought into the church. I do not believe that Baptism ever changed the heart of one man yet, or that it was ever designed to do so by its divine Institutor. It was intended, in my opinion, to be the door of admission into the *outward* church, to be the solemn and public profession of the faith supposed to exist previously in the heart. Here is the apostle, in the passage above quoted (1 Peter i. 23), writing to strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythia. Is it likely that he knew personally every one of all these? Not only knew them, but was acquainted also with all the different means, if they were different, by which they were brought to supplicate for mercy? And yet he assures them, one and all, that if they are born again, they are born again by the word of God. Surely this assertion proceeds on the hypothesis that the means of regeneration is one.

of them by the breath of his mouth" (Ps. xxxiii. 6). The cradle of Bethlehem was the beginning of that stupendous work of mercy, which shall issue in the bringing of many sons unto glory. The preaching of the gospel God has not entrusted to angels, but to men; and to such men too as the world in its wisdom is wont to despise (2 Cor. iv. 7). Of this gospel fishermen were the first heralds; and when Popery folded it in her deadly embrace, an humble monk succeeded in rescuing it. So, again, oftentimes you listen to a discourse and enjoy it: it is printed, you read it and are disappointed. Yet it is the very same discourse which, when delivered, so touched you. Whence, then, this disappointment? Because you anticipated that same effect from the reading which God has attached to the listening. The *preaching* of the Cross is the power of God, and the lever which he makes use of in the conversion and sanctification of his people. Oh, when the Spirit of God first applies the word to a sinner's heart, how great a change takes place! A change that shall outlive time,—a change as abiding as the word of the Lord itself. Previously the sinner was secure and at ease; now he is alarmed and unhappy. He tries in every way to throw off his terrors, and to assume his wonted carelessness, but in vain. Wherever he goes that word follows him, haunts him, and palls all his pleasures. Dismayed, he betakes himself to a round of duties and observances; but neither attention to these, although performed far more strictly than ever before, serves in any degree to pacify his now really alarmed conscience. Again and again does he strive most earnestly to keep the holy law, but increasing light from above enables him more clearly

to perceive the length and breadth of its every command; he finds that that law reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart; and that it is so extremely strict, as to pronounce a curse upon every one who, observing it carefully, fails in his obedience in only one point. Nor is this all. He discovers also the wretched imperfection of his best services, and his many, many short-comings. His conscience can get no ease; hell yawns at his feet. Vows and resolutions are made one upon another; but yet, try his hardest, still he breaks them. The more he aims to be righteous, the more he discovers himself a sinner. Now, too, many old sins, which he had long since forgotten, come like so many spectres from another world and increase his terrors. He would fain pause and consider; but then those tremendous words, "*Cursed* is every one that *continueth* not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10),—these anew urge him on. Again and again he attempts to climb the hill Perfection; sometimes for a little season he appears to make a little progress, only to be again and again precipitated into the mire beneath. And now he folds his hands in agony, and believes himself verily destined for hell. He has tried this and that, yea, and every avenue of escape of which he can conceive, and has miserably failed in all: hell seems nearer to him than ever. All things he imagines to be against him. The thought,—Thou art a sinner, thou art a sinner deserving eternal damnation,—this thought pursues him constantly. The word, like a barbed arrow, has fastened on his heart, and every attempt to remove it only serves to rankle and increase the wound which it made. Like the poor woman

mentioned by the evangelist, he is "nothing bettered, but rather grows worse" (Mark v. 26). His case appears desperate; he feels utterly at a loss what to do. But now he hears a voice wholly unlike all he had heard before. A voice sounding from Calvary reaches his ear and reverberates through his heart,—and, oh, how sweet are the words to his oppressed, despairing soul,—“Come unto me, poor, heavy-laden sinner, and I will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28). To go to Jesus,—what a new idea is this to him. He had always called Jesus his Saviour before, but he understood not what he said. Jesus give *me* rest, thinks he, then there is hope for me! Now with renewed diligence he again sets himself to work, in order that he may take something to Jesus to recommend him. He watches, he fasts, he prays, he reads, he gives alms, in order that he may find himself growing in grace and somewhat holier, and thus and then venture to apply to Jesus. But all to no purpose. This daubing the wall with untempered mortar (Ezekiel xiii. 10), this building with battlements which are not the Lord's (Jer. v. 10), is all of no use; “a stormy wind” blows all down. His case is truly dangerous, and, *therefore*, poor fool, he waits to get a little better ere he seeks the physician. But the Saviour loves him, and preserves him by his secret grace from this delusion, which has ruined myriads. “Without money and without price” is a warning that ever rings in his ears. “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick,” is a declaration that encourages him. And, truly, he needs encouragement, for he finds he makes no progress; he feels empty, sinful, wretched, and it is *hard to go to Christ thus*. He would fain bring some

few good works to Jesus, but he feels he has none, and he learns that as long as he stays away he can have none, that this is *the* work of God, to believe in him whom he hath sent (John vi. 29). But to go with a heart full of sin, and with an oppressed and accusing conscience, and without one single good work,—how can he? Ah, he knows not that it is the Lord himself drawing him! He knows not that *a Brother*, united to him by the bond of an everlasting covenant, that such a Brother is on the throne of grace longing to receive him with open arms. At length, impelled by necessity and a deep sense of misery, and enabled by sovereign grace, he takes the decisive step. “If I perish,” thinks he, “I perish.” To the crucified One he goes for mercy. This is his language: “Jesus, Saviour, have mercy on me. Be merciful to me a sinner.” His eye is directed to Calvary. He beholds One hanging there,—his face is wan, his eye is glassy, his hands are nailed, his side is pierced. Something whispers in his soul, “Thus was I crucified for thee; this I bore for thee; thy sins be forgiven thee.” He thinks of his sins, but they terrify no longer; their weight has gone, his heart is relieved, peace flows into his soul. Now does he cease from working for salvation, the finished work of Christ charms and ravishes him. Now he delights to gaze upon the wondrous Cross. Now he feels the blood of Jesus to be inexpressibly rich and precious. Now can he calmly look around him and say, “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,—yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

But forgiveness and peace are not the only blessings

which he so freely obtains from this gracious Saviour. The consciousness that the Lord was holy, yea, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, whilst that he himself was in every way a sinner, this had oft distressed him. But now this Brother arrays him in change of raiment,—raiment taken from his own costly wardrobe. That righteousness is now put upon him which I have explained in chapter five, as being the righteousness of God. He wanted a righteousness, and now truly he has one,—one exceeding his most sanguine expectations. The moment before he went to Jesus he was as filthy as sin could make him; the moment afterwards, he is washed in the blood and clothed in the righteousness of Jesus, and is, being arrayed *in this righteousness*, as holy as God himself. What an infinite change is this! Then, too, it had oft been his grief that his heart was so hard, his affections so cold, and his repentances so legal. But as he gazes upon that Cross, this cause also of grief is removed. How can his heart continue hard as he contemplates the goodness of this Saviour of his: so good that when he was an enemy to him, he loved him, and loved him with such a love as led him to hang there for him? How can he not repent, when he finds that by his sins he has crucified his Saviour,—that that dear good Lord, who had loved him with an everlasting love, and who by his loving-kindness had been drawing him (Jer. xxxi. 3),—that this gracious Saviour has received in return from him nothing but hostility and deep-rooted enmity? It was a look from Jesus which had subdued the hard-heartedness of Peter (Luke xxii. 61), and it was a look from this same Jesus which also melted *his* heart. How different were *the means* used by Joseph to those used by Jesus to

bring his brethren to repentance. Joseph, to convince his brethren of their guilt, afflicted *them*; Jesus, to convince his, afflicts *himself*. And how much more effectual is the method of Jesus, every believer can himself testify. That hymn of Dr. Watts which begins,—

“Alas, and did my Saviour bleed?”

contains the true doctrine concerning gospel repentance. “When I was ignorant of Christ,” says Luther somewhere, “no word more frightened me than the word repent; but after Christ revealed himself to my soul, no word could be sweeter, no employment more pleasant.”

What a cordial reception, then, does the seeking sinner meet with from Christ! What a free pardon does he receive! How differently does Jesus behave to him than, in his unbelief, he had anticipated. He was afraid he would spurn him from his presence, instead of which Jesus could treat no one more kindly than he has treated him. But besides all this, he had indeed heard that Jesus was a liberal and gracious Saviour, but then he was wholly ignorant how intimately and how eternally he was related to him. And even now he is far from understanding and realising this. Still, however, now he wonders at the excessive loving-kindness of this Saviour, but dares not yet set it down to the right cause. Every man by nature is an Arminian and a Papist. It is quite impossible for an unconverted man to comprehend the love of Christ, in its freeness, fulness, and unchangeableness. And when grace first takes the sinner in hand, all his ignorance and darkness is not immediately removed. He has to learn much more of his own vileness and of Christ's preciousness, ere he can at all fathom the un-

fathomable love of Christ. Hence you may often meet babes in grace, and spiritual dwarfs, earnest advocates of freewill and random salvation. David was an old and experienced believer when he made that memorable declaration : "Although my house be not so with God ; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure : for this is all my salvation, and all my desire." "These," says the chronicler, were "the last words of David" (2 Sam. xxiii. 1—5). The holy Baxter, too, when he came to die, being reminded by a *friend* of all his good works, shook his head and replied, "Do not tell me of my good works, I have had too much to do with them already." It is because of this *progressive* character of the Spirit of God's work, that Jesus does not ordinarily take his people to heaven immediately after he has converted them. They are to learn the plague of their own hearts, they are to be shaken out of all confidence in themselves, they are to be much more effectually, deeply, and experimentally convinced, that salvation is all of grace ; grace to begin with, grace to proceed with, grace to end with. And if the Lord is pleased occasionally to deviate from this rule of his, and take the sinner to himself soon after he has changed his heart, yet you may observe how very rapid is the work of grace in such cases : how speedily they advance in the knowledge of themselves, and of Christ Jesus their Lord. This, as I have already pointed out in chapter six, was the mode of the Spirit's procedure with the dying thief.

Well, then, being converted, Jesus sends them back again into the world. He has renewed and melted *their hearts*, he has pardoned their sins, he has saved

their souls. He has given them peace, and a promise of daily grace to sustain and preserve them. All this is for *nothing*. Like Joseph of old he refuses to take any money in payment (Compare Gen. xlii. 25 with Isaiah lv. 1). He lays, however, this charge upon them: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mark v. 19). These words were originally spoken to one from whom Jesus had cast out two thousand devils, and who, sitting at his feet, clothed and in his right mind, wanted to be with Jesus ever afterwards. Thus does the Lord treat nearly all his people, he does great things for them, and when they, perceiving his graciousness, desire ever to be with him, he bids them go and proclaim his glory by their lips and lives. And when they fear to return to the world, lest they should fall away from him again and grieve him, he comforts them with the assurance, "*I will never leave thee*" (Heb. xiii. 5). Not content therewith, he intercedes on their behalf with his Father thus: "I pray,—not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil" (John xvii. 15). And his prayer is heard, like as it was when he prayed for Peter: that apostle's faith did not entirely fail, though so terribly assaulted.

Here, then, dear christian friends, is our work whilst in this world away from Jesus,—to glorify him who hath saved us with so great a salvation. Poor distressed souls we are to point to Jesus, telling them of the efficacy of his blood, which we have ourselves experienced. Thus the Psalmist proclaims, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he

hath done for my soul" (Psalm lxi. 16). And, again, "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (Psalm xxxiv. 8). As for the world, when they behold us, they are to be struck with the wonders grace has wrought in us: they are to marvel, perceiving that we have been with Jesus (Acts iv. 13), and be constrained to acknowledge the striking difference between our present and our past life (1 Peter iv. 4). Thus shall they be led themselves to yield a forced tribute of praise to Jesus our Saviour.

But Jesus does not resign the care of our glorifying him into our hands. He himself undertakes that we shall glorify him: and glorify him, too, not only before men, but also in the sight of all those angelic intelligences that wait on him, the principalities and powers in heavenly places. By us, his church, they are to learn his manifold wisdom, his unsullied purity, his unutterable love (Eph. iii. 10). Ofttimes, I believe, we glorify him most when we ourselves are unconscious that we are glorifying him at all. Oh, surely, as those bright beings look down on us, they are constrained frequently to exclaim, "Wherefore dost thou love such sinners at all? How couldst thou love them so much as to die in their stead? O that all the love of God should be exhausted on them!" Then, ever and anon, as one sinner after another is brought to the knowledge of the truth, they behold the riches of his grace lavished on the most unlikely, the most wayward, the most rebellious individuals, in order that the more renown may redound to God in taking such desperate characters in hand, and in training them up to be like himself. They mark such souls led to lisp to God for mercy, and then their astonished language

is like that of their Lord himself, "Behold, he prayeth." They see the Lord frequently delay ere he answers the prayers of those petitioners: and now their wonder is vastly increased in that, instead of those being induced thereby to cease from knocking, by secret grace in their hearts, they are enabled to persevere in knocking louder. Again, when they see us wretched unbelievers led to confide in God and to trust in Christ, how greatly must they marvel. For although to trust in Christ presumptuously is very easy to an unconverted man who is ignorant how great a sinner he is, yet for one enlightened by the Spirit of God, and who feels that all his righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah lxiv. 6), for such an one to rest on the blood of Christ, and to dare to go *empty* to Christ, to go with nothing but sin,—oh, this is very, very difficult. To work such faith as this in us, is said, comparatively speaking, to be difficult even for God (Eph. i. 19). Yea, Jesus himself, who gives this faith, is himself reported to have marveled at his actings (Luke vii. 9; Matt. xv. 28). And if He sees cause to admire his own work, how much more may not his servants! Then, further, they see us abandoned sinners justified in an instant: one moment sinful, and then the next our every sin washed away in the blood of the Lamb. Yea, they see such sinners panting, struggling after holiness and God, as the hart, the most thirsty of animals, pants after the water-brooks (Psalm xlii. 1). They watch us, who are prone to sin by nature, oftentimes sorely tempted by Satan, yet resisting him and partially overcoming. The bruised reed, they see, is not broken, the smoking flax is not quenched! And if sometimes we do succumb and yield to our arch-enemy's devices,

they notice how unhappy we are until our feet have been restored to the paths of peace. They notice, too, the patience and the tenderness of the Redeemer in taking such wondrous care of wretches so vile as we are. Oh, how great is his forbearance, mercy, and love, towards us! What pains (if I may so speak) does he not take with us to bring us back to him when we have wandered! And when, through grace inclining us, we again resolve to return to our Jesus, and when holy angels watch us again venturing to supplicate for mercy, again getting comfort through his blood, oh, how much must they learn hence of the unutterable glory of their Master, in enabling them thus to seek him, and in pardoning them again, and again, and yet again, when they have sought him. For, oh, my brethren, if it was hard for us to go to Christ at first, how much more difficult is it to return to him after we have wandered, and again trust in his pardoning mercy. For when we were unconverted, our sins were not the thousandth part so great as they are when, having been pardoned, we again wander. For then we sin against such light, and love, and manifested mercy, as we could not do in our natural state. And yet, with all the heavy load of guilt and of felt ingratitude upon our consciences, we are enabled and drawn by our loving and adorable Saviour again and again to enter into his presence, and to seek and to find mercy. The angels watch his grace anew breaking our stony hearts, scattering all our doubts, chasing away all our unbelief, warming our souls again with his love, and filling us with gratitude, and joy, and peace, constraining us ourselves to tear away every idol from our affections, in order that he alone may reign over us:

they mark our eyes suffused with truly penitential tears; the tide of joy rises higher in their souls; anew they touch their melodious harps and sing that blessed song, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints" (Rev. xv. 3).

Sinning, repenting, evil-resisting; sinning, repenting, evil-resisting,—such, dear friends, is the wayward life of a christian here on earth! He hates sin, and yet commits it! (Rom. vii. 14—25.) He loves God, and yet wanders from him! Would you not imagine that the Saviour would at last become wearied with his backslidings, and refuse to pardon him any more? Well, indeed, you may. The christian himself often wonders at the Lord's patience with him. But as he advances in the divine life, and in the knowledge of the sacred word, he comes to understand more of that eternal covenant which Jehovah, in his Trinity of persons, was pleased to enter into with his own glorious Self for all his people's salvation, and for his as one of them. He begins to perceive how nearly and intimately related are all his people to their Covenant Head, the Lord Jesus Christ;—that they are his purchased possession, and he is their God;—that they are his bride, and he is their Husband;—that they are his brethren, and that he is their elder Brother (Heb. ii. 11—17). And sometime in their lives this gracious Brother is pleased to manifest himself unto their souls in a peculiar and blessed manner (John xiv. 21—23). To some he reveals himself whilst they are on their knees before him; they feel drawn out to pray to him more earnestly than they ever did before; when, lo, their prayers are turned into praises, grace incon-

ceivable is poured into their souls, Jesus shews himself to the eye of their faith in a most glorious and comfortable manner; every fear of theirs instantly vanishes, being dispelled by his gracious smile. Sometimes this grace is so overpowering, that some favoured souls have had to ask the Lord to stay his hand, for fear their little earthen vessel, which could contain no more joy, should burst. And oftentimes, too, those poor doubting souls who have been nearly all their lifetime subject to bondage, and to doubts and fear, but a little before their death, occasionally only a few hours or even minutes, have been comforted with such a gracious declaration of the Lord's love, that they have felt heaven begun in their souls whilst yet on earth. Not that I mean to discourage any poor soul who has not enjoyed this. Oh, no! To such an one I would say, take heed to the Lord's direction contained in Isaiah l. 10. Here is a promise written for thee: "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me" (Isaiah xlix. 23). But I mean to say that, when Jesus is thus pleased to manifest himself to one of his people, they then have the full explanation afforded them as to the reason of the Lord's forbearance with them: they find that he is their own dear and adorable Brother. *Why* he should have condescended to have become their Brother is quite another question, and one which, I believe, will never, can never, be adequately answered,—no, not in heaven. But having become their Brother, the reason of his tender treatment of them is explained. "I am the Lord," says he, "*I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*" (Mal. iii. 6). As much as to say, "I am your Brother from everlasting (Prov. viii. 23), and am

determined ever to behave as such. I *will* heal your backslidings, I *will* love you freely (Hosea xiv. 4). I have a Brother's love towards you, and ever shall have" (Heb. xiii. 8). Yes, yes, it is true Jesus Christ is our Husband, our Brother, and loves us like his Father does, with an infinite, eternal, unchangeable love.

But mark, when Jesus pardons us, and when he manifests himself to us, he never reminds us of our ungrateful treatment of him. Wayward and perverse we may be, ungrateful towards our best and dearest Friend we often are, but when we go to Jesus, he fully, freely, lovingly forgives us, and invariably without one harsh or unkind word. When he forgives, he forgives like Jesus, so as himself only could and would forgive. And herein, my brethren, he differs most remarkably from Joseph. When Joseph manifested himself to his brethren, he encouraged them with many tender and affectionate words. But yet there was one expression contained in his address which undoubtedly must have touched them to the quick, and caused them exquisite pain. When he declared to them, "I am Joseph, your brother," he also added, "*whom ye sold into Egypt.*" Considering the amazement and terror with which on that occasion they were possessed, they needed all the consolation which it was in his power to administer. But these words, betraying, as they do, a want of delicacy on his part, and of consideration for their feelings, in thus reminding them of that black page in their history,—these words, I say, form a striking contrast to the behaviour of Jesus towards us his people. When he forgives, he casts all our sins behind his back (Isaiah xxxviii. 17), he hurls them to the bottom of the sea (Micah vii. 19).

4

Nor is this all, where our sins have abounded, his grace much more abounds (Rom. v. 20). Thus, witness the conduct of Jesus after the resurrection. Knowing how disconsolate his disciples were whilst they imagined they had lost their beloved Master, he sent them a message fraught with comfort, and without one single hint at their previous cowardice (John xx. 17). Yea, and not only so, but as Peter had more grievously sinned against him than the others had, his name was expressly mentioned by an angel, doubtless at his Lord's direction, in order to re-assure and console that apostle (Mark xvi. 7). Grace, grace, all is of grace!

Oh, what a good and gracious Saviour then is Jesus! How he does love us! He loves us now with the same love as when he first undertook our ransom; he will love us eternally as much as he loves us now. He longs to have us all at home with himself, that he may rest in his love, and that we may be happy with him. But that glorious passage in Zephaniah (iii. 17), is yet prophecy: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." Still many, very, very many, of his people are already with him. He begun by taking Abel, and he has been busily engaged in receiving sinners to himself ever since. And he will have *all* his people with him: such is his own will (John xvii. 24), and such is his Father's (John. vi. 39). Not one, no, not the youngest, weakest believer must be lost, or left behind. Every elect soul must be brought home. God has promised that Christ shall "see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah liii. 11). But, however, many of us who do belong to him, are

yet in the world. Brother Abel, brother Enoch, brother Abraham, brother David, brother Peter, brother Paul, have arrived safe. Now they are with their elder Brother. But we must be with him too. He loves us as much as he loves them. Yet he continues us here for a little season, in order that we may be the means of bringing others to his throne of mercy, who have never sought him yet. This will add to our joy when presently with him, namely, that we each brought others to him (See John i. 40—46). Meanwhile, he supplies us with abundance of every good thing to help us on our way. Not only has he changed our raiment (Zech. ii. 1—5, with Matt. xxii. 11), not only is he continually giving us fresh grace,—grace equal to our daily need,—but he has also given us various means for lightening our journey and rendering our pilgrimage pleasanter. Oftentimes we feel comforted and strengthened when we meet at his throne of grace, often, also, when we gather around his table. Would that whilst away from him we more frequently remembered his exhortation, “See that ye fall not out by the way;” or, clothed in New Testament language, “Love one another as I have loved you.” But, alas, in these days of abounding profession, christians too oft mix with the world and love its children, provided that they worship in the same or like sanctuary as themselves, and frequently, yea, ordinarily, look shy of their real brethren, if they do not. Some slight difference in opinion, in position, in circumstances, is wont, now-a-days, to form an almost impassable chasm between the brethren of the Lord Jesus. Truly, truly, iniquity abounds, and the love of many, who once promised fair, has waxed cold. Ah, well, we shall

soon be at home with our Brother, whose love is so infinite and immutable. There will be no shyness then, no distance then. We shall love Jesus so very intensely that when we behold another beloved by him, our whole souls will love him too. Great indeed will be our delight to be surrounded by those who are loved by Jesus. Oh, to think that we shall be encircled on all sides by myriads of happy souls on whom the love of God and of Christ has been lavished equally as on ourselves. To behold, too, all those filled with the intensest love towards Him whom we also love intensely. Oh, joy!

Soon, too, He will come. When the number of his elect shall have been accomplished, when the last favoured soul shall have been taught by the blessed Spirit that Jesus, his own Jesus, lives for him, then will the sound of his chariot wheels be heard as he descends the empyrean and alights in the mid-air. The world is only spared as long as God has his Lots in it. They are the salt of the earth. But they themselves are continually crying, "Lord Jesus, come quickly." And not even to that prayer shall God always appear to slumber. Yes, that day, that joyful, that terrible day approaches. The trumpet sounds. Its clang reverberates through all the chambers of the dead, and reanimates the dust of all those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. The dead in Christ arise. The east, the west, the north, the south, yea, and the briny ocean too, each and all contribute to swell that multitude "which no man can number." Some were burnt to death, and their ashes scattered to the four winds or cast into an adjacent river. Still all is restored to them. The costly mausoleums of the wealthy were

utterly superfluous. The Lord knoweth them that are his; knoweth, too, where every particle of their bodies is deposited. All that belongs to them is precious in his eyes. Suddenly, as in a moment, a change passes upon every living saint. Their poor mortal bodies become instantly clothed with immortality. The body of sin has gone. They look upwards, and, O rapture! they see Jesus. Yes, it is Jesus himself. They know him by his gracious look, by his beneficent smile. Sweetly, irresistibly, each is escorted upwards by angels to meet the Lord. Oh, what myriads throng the air. Countless millions cluster round the Lamb on every side. There, now, Jesus at last has all his people with him. Well have the angels done their work. Not one elect soul is missing: all are gathered. They knew them by the seal of the living God upon them (Eph. i. 13). Oh, how happy all are. Jesus is happy, for at length he has his bride, his people. He beholds that church for whom he underwent so much, and, lo, every member is present. He is satisfied. His people are happy, for now they are with Jesus. No sin now harasses them. Uninterruptedly they enjoy Jesus. Presently the Saviour descends. His saints follow him. His foot rests on Olivet. "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword." With it he slays the nations of the ungodly (Rev. xix. 15). Then follows the glorious millennium as described in the eighth chapter. At the close of that, Satan is allowed to make one last insane and desperate attempt against the Redeemer's glory. Those nations of the wicked who were miraculously slain by the Saviour when he first visibly assumed the sceptre of the world are now miraculously restored to life. These

Satan gathers together into one vast army, with the intent to storm Jerusalem, where the King and his saints dwell. But vengeance no longer slumbers. Fire from God devours them.* And now is beheld the great white throne. Jesus, the Judge of quick and dead, arrayed in his divine majesty, is seated thereon. How terrible his look! If the countenance of an angel on the resurrection morn resembled the lurid lightning (Matt. xxviii. 3), well may we believe that the countenance of the angel's Lord is "as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. i 16). Heaven and earth cannot encounter his gaze: they flee away in consternation (Rev. xx. 16). All creation is gathered before him: not one intelligent being is absent. The elect angels, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, are all in attendance on their King. There, also, are Satan and his host. That ghastly crew of spirits had once in heaven spurned the righteous sway of God's eternal Son; they, in the person of their chief, had invaded the purity of Eden's garden, and had brought sin and death into the world, and all our woe; they were the instigators of those who crucified the Saviour; and they have been the constant and most bitter enemies of all his blood-bought people: now at his dread tribunal are they unwillingly present in order to receive their tremendous sentence. The saints of the Lord shall put their

* It may seem strange that these enemies of the Lord should be restored to life, seeing that, so speedily afterwards, they are again slain. Yet Revelation, chap. xx., expressly asserts that such will be the case. Probably God, by thus raising them, intends to make it manifest that neither death, nor the state which succeeds death, at all changes character:—that the lost, were they permitted to return to this world, would again commence those wicked practices in which they were proceeding when death overtook them.

feet upon the necks of those devils who formerly harassed them (Rom. xvi. 20). The wicked, too, are all there. Their bodies, also, are restored to them, and are fitted now to endure torments such as previously would have dissolved them in an instant. The eyes of an assembled universe are fixed on Jesus. Some are pale with suspense, others are filled with ecstatic joy. These are ranged on his right hand, those on his left. At this grand and awful moment the reproach of his Cross is for ever annihilated. From the lips of the Man of Sorrows is to proceed the irrevocable and eternal destiny of all men. Now the Saviour, turning to his people, bids them "come to him." This word is not new to them; they had oft heard it when on earth sounding in their hearts. Even then they had begun to "come" to him, and they had found that the more intimately acquainted they were with him, the more joy had possessed their souls. When once they had "come" to him, the cry first escaped their hearts, "Jesus, my God, bring me nearer to Thee!" And the nearer they lived to Jesus, the intenser did that cry become. The knowledge of Jesus and his precious love had produced not satiety, but appetite. Hence, by this word so solemnly pronounced, he increases their joy ten thousand fold. He causes their spirits to press on ten thousand times more speedily towards the full knowledge of his love. Whilst, on the other hand, those who had spurned his love, and who, in heart and life had ever said to him, "Depart from us," those he takes at their word, to those he also says, "Depart from me." And if these wretches were miserable before, through having hearts estranged and inimical to Jesus, oh, how much more miserable when

that divine* impetus is given to their awful obliquity. Then the Judge, rising from his throne with majestic composure, leaves them to be hurried down to those everlasting burnings originally prepared for the devil and his angels, who, once their tempters, are now their tormentors. Hell closes upon them: their shrieks form, indeed, an awful contrast to the haughty and supercilious language, in which formerly they had been wont to indulge. After this, Jesus, taking his church by the hand, leads her into the presence of his eternal Father, and says, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me" (Isa. viii. 18, with Heb. ii. 13). As for them, they fear not to be presented: their God is their Father, his Son is their Saviour, their Brother, their Husband. The Father beholds them with complacency and delight; he had ever loved them, he had given them Jesus, and Jesus, agreeable to his will, has brought them all home (John vi. 39). Yes, they are at *home* with their Father and their Brother. As long as their God and King lives they are happy. And Jesus, unlike Joseph, ever lives the Saviour of his brethren. Nor are his brethren merely safe. They are washed in the blood and clothed in the righteousness of their Jesus, God's own Son. They are pure in heart. They are made kings and priests unto God (Rev. i. 6). They are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 17). They are, in virtue of their union with Jesus, sharers of his throne (Rev. iii. 21). They are one in God (John xvii. 21).

* So too, Jesus, when on earth, said unto the murderous Pharisees, "*Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers*" (Matt. xxiii. 32). Some critics, forgetful of the truth that God is just as well as merciful, have attempted to *soften the word of Christ from the aorist Imperative* (πληρωσατε) into the *future Indicative* (πληρωσεται).

That all this, my brethren, may be your lot and mine, may God in mercy grant for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 1—4).

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. xxi. 22—27).

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